



FEMINIST APPROACHES TO SOCIAL WORK IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST MALE VIOLENCE

WORLD EXPERIENCES

Conference Book



Funded by the
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Feminist Approaches to Social Work in Combating Male Violence

World Experiences
Conference Book



Feminist Approaches to Social Work in Combating Male Violence – World Experiences Conference Book

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PREFACE

As Mor Çatı, since our foundation in 1990, we have been carrying out our struggle against male violence through feminist methods and for this end, we build solidarity with women in solidarity centers and shelters. Hearing what women experience in the institutions they apply to during their struggle to get away from violence not only helps us formulate suggestions on how mechanisms to combat violence against women should function, but also allows us to witness the existing problems closely. In Turkey, we frequently come together with women's organizations—especially with the components of the Women's Shelters and Solidarity/Counselling Centers Assembly— and feminists working in the field of combating violence to evaluate our own work and to develop strategies to combat the shortcomings and obstacles in the fight against violence against women in Turkey. On the other hand, it has always been inspiring and empowering for us to hear the experiences of feminists from different parts of the world on the work they carry out and the solutions they find to the obstacles they face. Since its foundation, Mor Çatı has prioritized being in transnational solidarity with feminists and organizations, especially from Europe, against male violence. We organized the international conference titled Feminist Approaches to Social Work in Combating Male Violence - World Experiences, which we held online, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, on October 9-10, 2021. 200 people attended the conference and speakers from 10 different countries including Austria, Germany, England, Italy, France, Scotland, Sweden, Ireland, Hungary, Hungary, and the USA shared their experiences. Hearing about the work being done in different countries was an opportunity for us to think about our own work and to be inspired by other feminists. We wanted to disseminate this experience by turning the conference into a bilingual publication. In this publication, you will find the texts of the panels organized on the first day of the conference as well as the texts of the three workshops organized simultaneously on the second day.

We hope that this publication will contribute to our feminist struggle against male violence.

PROGRAM

9 OCTOBER 2021

11.00 - 12.00 OPENING SESSION

11.00 - 11.15 Opening

11.15 - 11.45 Rosa Logar, Domestic Abuse Intervention Centre Vienna

11.45 - 12.00 Q&A

12.00 - 14.00 PANEL: Feminist Approaches to Social Support Work

12.00 - 12.30 Liz Kelly

12.30 - 13.00 Britta Schlichting - ZIF - Central Information Center for Autonomous Women's Shelters

13.00 - 13.30 Açelya Uçan - Mor Çatı Women's Shelter Foundation

13.30 - 14.00 Q&A

14.00 - 15.00 LUNCH BREAK

15.00 - 17.00 PANEL: Institutional Coordination Practices on VAW

15.00 - 15.30 Marcella Pirrone - D.i.Re National Women's Network against Violence

15.30 - 16.00 Ghada Hatem - La Maison des Femmes

16.00 - 16.30 Catriona Grant

16.30 - 17.00 Q&A

10 OCTOBER 2021

14.00 - 17.00

WORKSHOP 1: Special needs, different practices

Jenny Westerstrand - ROKS (National Organisation for Women's Shelters and Young Women's Shelters in Sweden)

Ceyda Keskin - BFF (Federal Association of Rape Crisis Centres and Women's Counselling Centres)

Senay Dur - IMECE Women's Centre

WORKSHOP 2: Struggle Mechanisms of Sexual Violence

Enikő Pap - NANE Women's Rights Association

Cliona Saidlear - Rape Crisis Network Ireland

WORKSHOP 3: Experiences on Alternative Struggle Mechanisms against Male Violence

Tamar Çitak - Domestic Abuse Intervention Centre Vienna

Angela McGraw - Women & Children First



OPENING SESSION

Tülin Semayiş: We came together today as women from different countries at the Feminist Approaches to Social Work in the Struggle Against Male Violence – World Experiences Conference. In this conference, the speakers in addressing the issue of male violence will talk about their experiences pertaining to women’s solidarity centers, shelters, alternative methods, and feminist approaches to social work. We are hoping that the knowledge and experiences we share here would inspire us to rethink our methods. I am giving the floor to Rosa Logar from Domestic Violence Intervention Center, Vienna. Rosa, it is a pleasure to have you here today. The floor is yours now.

Rosa Logar: It’s a great pleasure and honor to be here with you today. I want to start with a warm feminist thank you to all the great feminists of Turkey for their brave fight against the patriarchy. I admire you greatly. We will always stand together; we will never give up. I admire so much how the feminists in Turkey have been working bravely for many years and how they have not given up now that the president decided to pull out of the Istanbul Convention. So, I’m very proud to be a part of your conference today. Like many feminists and human rights experts, I am deeply concerned about President Erdoğan’s decision to leave the Istanbul Convention. But we can assure him that the Convention will not leave him. I got sad in the beginning as a member of the committee drafting the Istanbul Convention from 2008 to 2010 and as someone who still remembers the active role Turkey played in the preparation of the Convention in the Council of Europe and its efforts to adopt it proudly in Istanbul in 2011. That was only ten years ago. So, what happened in those ten years? In the past ten years, we have been facing a global backlash against women’s human rights. Opposition to the Istanbul Convention has been growing in several countries. Poland also decided to withdraw from the Convention. And in the European Union, right-wing coups in parties are blocking the Convention in the Union. It seems that patriarchal, anti-democratic, and anti-feminist politicians understand human rights as men’s rights. This is not new. But the boldness with which these leaders are opposing women’s and children’s rights are worrisome. During the Covid-19 pandemic, women and girls are even more affected by gender-based violence and femicide. It is important to explore and analyze who the actors and groups opposing the Istanbul Convention are, where they come from, what their goals are, and how they operate. Importantly, this opposition needs to be named and addressed. The opposition to the Istanbul Convention needs to be named as they pose a serious threat to women’s and children’s rights as well as to gender equality, human rights, democracy, and the rule of law. The opposition is delaying and blocking ratifications and hindering the implementation of the Convention. Therefore, they are harming societies and individuals, especially women survivors of violence and their children. The opposition is impeding progress that is urgently needed to save the lives, health, and freedom of millions of women and girls in Europe. It instills unreasonable fear in

people regarding the Convention, such as the fear that the Convention might “contribute to human extinction.” They go so far as to say that the Istanbul Convention will lead to the extinction of humans because women will not want to have children anymore. They are voicing such atrocities. Demonization as such and the lies are both dangerous and irresponsible. Therefore, we need to understand the “anti-gender” movements to be able to counteract them through joint efforts of governments, civil societies, institutions, and international organizations. I suggest that we work together in WAVE and in other trans-national networks and that we form an additional monitoring body, a shadow GREVIO committee to monitor the implementation of the Istanbul Convention in all countries which are former and yet to be parties to the Istanbul Convention. And I call upon all donors and governments supporting the Istanbul Convention to fund such an initiative and to ensure that the Istanbul Convention will always remain as the Istanbul Convention and that it will be monitored in every country including Turkey. Patriarchal leaders argue that they do not need the Istanbul Convention, that they have their own national provisions to prevent violence against women and domestic violence. But this is not true. As a GREVIO member, I was one of the rapporteurs evaluating Turkey’s compliance with the Convention. Despite the progress that Turkey has made in the past decades thanks to the efforts of the women active in the field, there are many gaps in the systems of support, protection, and prevention that cost women’s and children’s lives, health, and freedom. By the way, other countries are also in a similar situation. Turkey is not the only one. You can read in the GREVIO report on Turkey a long list of recommendations on what Turkey must do to improve the situation. I also want to express my gratitude and appreciation for the thousands of experts and activists in women’s organizations and civil society as well as those in different professions, state institutions, and the judiciary who have been working ceaselessly for the support and protection of survivors in Turkey. Thank you all, we will continue to work together. I also want to thank all those who are experts by experience of the world, the women and girls who are survivors of violence and who are speaking out against the tortures they endure and against the unjust systems denying them the right to lead an independent life free from violence—a life of their own, free from a husband that exploits and beats them, free from a partner or a family they have to serve like slaves. These are not the family values we want to uphold. These are not the family values we miss in the Istanbul Convention. These are tyrannies which we will not accept to exist anywhere on this planet and against which we will continue to fight. Here we have a wonderful picture of activists from Turkey fighting for the Istanbul Convention. You really give us hope and you are a great example for those of us living in European countries. This conference is titled “Feminist Approaches to Social Work in the Struggle Against Male Violence—World Experiences” and I want to start by looking at violence

against women from a global perspective. What is striking here is that male violence against women and girls is a global problem. There is no country in this world where women and girls live free from violence. In all countries they are subjected to various forms of violence and discrimination because of their gender. For instance, women are exploited through unpaid work, low-paid work, forced work or clandestine work, forced marriage, or sexual exploitation. Women and girls experience violence in every area of society—at home, in their relationships in the so-called private or domestic sphere; at the workplace and in institutions in the public sphere. Even women parliamentarians are subjected to sexual harassment and violence. Women of all ages are exposed to violence; they are sexually abused in early childhood, exposed to cyber violence in their teenage years, and are raped, neglected, and beaten as senior women. There is no age at and no political context in which women can live free from violence. Women and girls are subjected to violence both in times of peace and in times of armed conflict and war, in authoritarian states as well as in democracies. But we can clearly see that in a democracy with a developed welfare state guaranteeing basic human rights women have better chances to free themselves and organize against male violence and discrimination. Violence against women and girls is not a cultural problem. It is a question of power rooted in the historically unequal power relationships between women and men. Violence is one of the crucial mechanisms by which women are forced into subordinate positions. As British sociologist Sylvia Walby argues, it is a domain, a part of our system which is connected to other domains such as the economy. Walby shows that the economic crisis has increased the rate of violence in general and violence against women and domestic violence in particular. And the same, I think, this is the case now with the Covid-19 pandemic. Globally there is more violence committed in interpersonal relationships than in times of war and armed conflict, and in most cases, women and girls are the victims. As I said, there is no escape for women and girls from violence and discrimination. Is there any place on earth where women and girls are really safe? The honest answer is no. Nowhere in society and at no time of their lives, women and girls are really safe. That sounds like a depressing message from me, but I do not want to depress you. Also, I know that I cannot depress you because you are active, and you will not give up. I think it is important to clearly say this to our institutions and to people who work in this field in order to show how the system of violence and discrimination is keeping women in an unacceptable situation. It is utterly important for women's organizations and social work institutions to create safe spaces where women and their children can heal and become empowered. That is the reason why we need safe spaces for women and girls. Women and girls need safe spaces because of the magnitude and the character of the problem that we are facing. We need safe spaces such as women's shelters, women's centers, and women's helplines. The burning question is why our societies still accept this amount

of violence every single day? Imagine that in France, Italy, or Turkey every third man would be regularly abused or beaten by a woman or that two or three men per week would be killed by their wives because they asked for a divorce. This is almost beyond our imagination, and luckily so since we don't want this. Yet, this would have certainly caused a political uproar. Politicians would mobilize all the means available to them to stop the violence. With violence against women and girls this is not the case. It is so commonplace that it is perceived as normal. We do not even blink an eye when a woman is murdered. It just makes a few lines in the newspapers. Even if violent men threaten to kill their wives, they are often not stopped; they remain free to carry out the deed. If this would have happened, let us say to the mayor of Vienna or another city, that an aggressor would beat him up several times without being arrested and then kill him, someone would have to take the political responsibility. The head of the police or justice system would be expected to resign. This is not the case when a woman is killed by her husband after a long history of abuse; especially if she happens to be a migrant woman or migrant worker. So, what we have here is a very alarming picture. And I think it is our work to keep addressing these issues since the social work we carry out and the support we provide for the survivors depend on the knowledge about these kinds of issues. So, here is another nice picture of your great movement. It is a poster against the midnight decree. Erdoğan announced it at midnight, and of course this made many women angry. This also gives us the power to continue our struggle. I argue that there is no constant outcry when it comes to violence against women because the violence serves a purpose. The purpose is to oppress and exploit women and to keep them in their place. These can be very depressing thoughts and analyses. The violence serves to keep women in their place. Does it sound as if I am exaggerating? Well, unfortunately I am not. It is the truth that explains why violence against women is so pervasive and extensive even after decades of work carried against it. The states could not manage to reduce the amount of violence as prevalence surveys and campaigns such as the #metoo campaign have shown. Violence serves to intimidate women and to restrict our freedom. It creates barriers to what we want to achieve. It weakens and injures us. It makes us live in fear every day. Women and girls are not born vulnerable, they are made vulnerable. Another dangerous mechanism for women is the culturalization of violence. Right-wing groups and parties have created the narrative "the refugees are raping our women". This narrative instills fear and hate against refugees and asylum seekers. Such propaganda often aims at gaining votes and unfortunately, it works. I have to admit that it also works in Austria. We have a government that is gaining votes every month by stating that they will not take a single refugee from the Greek Islands or Afghanistan. I apologize, it is very sad to be in such a sad situation. We are just hoping now to get rid of this chancellor somehow because they are deeply involved in corruption and that is not a surprise. But we have this

very dangerous problem of creating hate against certain groups of people and the culturalization of violence is dangerous. The attribution of violence to certain cultures does not lead to more protection of victims but quite the contrary. To give an example, I want to mention the two cases our center brought before the CEDAW committee. These are the cases of two women of Turkish background who were murdered. CEDAW decided that the authorities have violated both women's right to be protected from violence. The Austrian authorities, however, denied any responsibility and they argued that the death threats by the perpetrators before the murders had to be seen in the light of their cultural backgrounds and had therefore been considered as not serious. Now this attitude has not fundamentally changed in Austria, rather it's now combined with even more racism. Migrant women and migrant families are facing huge troubles in receiving adequate help. Oppression and exploitation of women are often hidden and are denied. The facts are ignored. Beliefs are used as excuses for inaction. Women are equal anyways. Patriarchy does not exist in our countries. Feminists are making it all up. The problem is individualized. Women are blamed for having chosen the wrong men, for being out late, or for being overly sensitive. Women are told to avoid going to certain places or wearing certain clothes. Women are warned that they should not act or dress in a provocative way. Even women killed by men are blamed postmortem in the courtroom for having provoked the murder! Men are really sanctioned for violence, and impunity rates are high in all our countries. Reporting rates are low because women fear to act. Even if they do, chances are high for the perpetrators to get away with their act. In Austria only 14% of sexual violence charges lead to a conviction. Most of the cases reported are dropped because there is no evidence. The testimonies of women are often not regarded as evidence because judges are biased and do not believe what women victims of violence say. Victim blaming is widespread as a part of the system of oppression of women who have no space. But still women are not passive victims, they work together, and they try to protect themselves and their children and prevent the worst from happening. They organize against and resist the violence and the blame. We are here to change the violence and discrimination women and girls face. Feminist approach in social work and in the social system plays an important role in achieving this goal. Feminist approaches mean that we do not individualize the violence, but we see it as a systemic problem that calls for systemic changes. This includes, as mentioned, specialist women's support services that apply a gender-sensitive intersectional approach for all women victims of violence and their children. Help of specialists in women's support services is necessary to provide all women with the support they need. As I have already said, this is also based on the Istanbul Convention, and even if the Istanbul Convention is not ratified by your country, you can ratify it. We can all ratify it as groups working against violence. So, it applies, we can apply the Istanbul Convention. Access to services must be 24/7 immediately. The

problem in many countries is that the access to services is restricted by bureaucratic procedures and waiting lists. All that needs to be removed. Easy and immediate access is needed. And of course, what kind of services are offered is an important issue. They have to be based on human rights. Human rights-based means that they have to respect the rights of the survivors including the survivors' rights to make decisions and to decide on their lives. They have to be victim-centered, looking at the situation of each victim individually, and of course, they have to be gender-sensitive. Because as we have seen violence is not a gender-neutral problem. Women's support services should provide independent support focusing on the rights and needs of the victims. It needs to be offered without discrimination on any grounds such as age, disability, nationality, gender identity and sexual orientation, migrant or refugee status, or any other status. Undocumented migrant women and children and women with disabilities need to have full access to services. So where are we in Europe concerning specialist women's support services? Take a quick look. I call it the map of gaps. Women's shelters. We have approximately 2350 women's shelters in Europe according to the 2019 WAVE report from 46 countries. These figures are an estimation because it is very difficult for the WAVE office to establish the real numbers. They are approximate numbers that you can count on. These shelters provide about 31,943 places for women and children. According to the minimum standard in the Istanbul Convention, there should be one place for every 10,000 inhabitants. So, 84,000 places would be needed but 52,000 are missing. We have a huge gap in safe spaces in women's shelters. When it comes to women's helplines, 35 countries have a national helpline, but only in 25 countries the helpline operates 24/7 and is free of charge. So, there is still a lot to do for our governments in all countries to provide specialist women's support services. This is not the case only in Turkey, but also in many countries. The specialist support services alone are not enough. Women need social and economic rights to be able to live a life free from violence. This also includes the right to affordable housing. This is a very important economic right. We have also underlined this point in many GREVIO reports including those on Turkey. Turkish reports state that the lack of housing is forcing women to stay with a violent partner. It is forcing women to stay in shelters. And they should not be forced to remain in these situations. They should have the right to affordable housing everywhere. The right to free or affordable childcare is another right, of course. The right to education and training; right to support in accessing the labor market. Adequate financial aid. Free health care. And the right to organize and establish groups and programs for the empowerment of women and girls in all regions. Self-organization is the core element of empowerment. Women do not want to be a client only. They want to be actors. They want to actively work for their rights and to make their lives better. So again, we have a wonderful picture of the sisters with the rainbow flag. As to my conclusions, in order to reach the goal of

preventing violence against women and domestic violence, financial and human resources need to be considerably increased globally. Currently, the sector is completely underfunded. Even in countries that have a good system like Austria until a few years ago we did not have enough support for the victims. We do not have enough places in shelters. We do not have enough time for each woman and we cannot provide the same standard in the intervention center where we offer services to 6,000 survivors. This only gives us the possibility to provide crisis support. Now we can get more money and the government gave us %50 more funding. It was a long fight. So, without adequate resources and investments, the goal to reduce and prevent violence against women and girls will not be reached in the next hundred years. Can we afford this investment? We can. Imagine that we have 1747 trillion US dollars. I cannot imagine how much money that is. We took this number from the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. They made calculations in 2013 and this was the world's military spending back then. 1747 trillion US dollars. What could we do with this money for instance? With this money, we could fund UN Women for 6300 years. Imagine how much money goes into militarization. Militarization, the production of arms and bombs as well as wars and armed conflicts, costs enormous amounts. And it reproduces toxic masculinities and destruction. As a result, financial resources for social and economic rights, affordable housing, education, health, culture, the environment, and other important issues are wanting. I want to end with a quote from the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action where the delegates to the conference made a recommendation to the governments asking them to generate new public and private financial resources. We want the governments to fulfill what they promised in 1995, we want them to reduce military spending and invest in the life and freedom of women and girls. Thank you.

Tülin Semayış: Rosa, thank you very much for this wonderful presentation. Thank you also for summarizing the recent backlashes and the whole process that we have been going through as well as for the international solidarity that you build with us. The first question is a personal one. When did you decide to call yourself a feminist?

Rosa Logar: Good question. I was born in a quite poor rural area in the south of Austria and my parents were luckily from a very poor rural background. They were very determined that their children should go to school and have a good education. And also with the social improvement in the 70s in Austria the children had better conditions to go to school. We got free books. Already in the gymnasium I was a very active pupil. I didn't have any connections there yet with the feminist movement because I did have connections with political movements, and then I moved to Vienna when I was 18 together with other women. In Vienna there was a house which was occupied by feminists who were demanding a women's shelter and

a women's center. It was in 1976, I'm quite old. So, I got involved in this occupy movement and I became a feminist. Then I studied social work. This continued. After I finished my studies, I had already started to work in a group with other women to establish the first women's shelter in Austria. That was my history. Thank you for this question. I like personal questions because you know in the women's movement we have this saying that the personal is political. Thank you.

Tülin Semayiş: I will combine some of the questions Rosa. Thank you for your answer. You have talked about the culturalization of violence. What is the most vital step we should take to prevent the normalization of such a phenomenon? Another question pertains to what you think about the discrimination and violence the LGBTI+ people face? Finally, how are we going to build a world free of violence when the global capital keeps investing in arms and war?

Rosa Logar: I think the first step that needs to be taken about these phenomena is to detect and name them. We have to become aware of them. An example comes to my mind. The police in Vienna have a press center. They decide on which cases are to be made public and which are not. So, we detected that when they report violence the cases often pertain to migrants; they tend to report cases of violence that involve migrants or take place in migrant families. They also openly say this, so, for me, the situation amounts to something more than culturalization; this attitude is already racist. We try to engage them in a discussion. We say to them that they cannot do this. The cases they report has to be proportional. They should not paint a picture where all violent men are migrants or asylum seekers. Unfortunately, as you know, we have a big right-wing party in the government. The police do not necessarily listen to what we have to say. So, they report the nationality of the perpetrator, but at least, they have to name every nationality. So, you can read about the nationality of the perpetrator; an Austrian man, a Romanian man, etc. I think this is still not right. I think they should not provide the nationality of the person because in our climate it is not good to focus on that aspect. LGBTIQ rights are also very important. I'm very concerned about the development of the serious attacks on LGBTIQ rights in many countries. We must also include LGBTIQ rights. I am aware of the situation not only because I am a lesbian myself but because we need to make sure that these groups are not discriminated against. And what should we do about the arms... I think the women's movement and maybe also the WAVE can form coalitions with other women's groups like the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. We have just formed a new group in Austria to fight against interpersonal violence and violence in war because we know as feminists that these forms of violence are interconnected. We have to make these connections especially when we address the militarization of our societies. When we are talking about

violence against women we have to detect and name different forms of violence in order to make these connections.

Tülin Semayış: Thank you Rosa. The next question is about young women. Do you have any suggestions for young women who would like to pursue a career and to work in the area of violence prevention and empowerment of women? I will also share some comments and a question: "Dear Rose thank you for this enlightening presentation and your solidarity. In your presentation you talked about a feminist approach and stated that how it does not tackle violence as an individualized issue but sees as a systemic problem. I definitely agree with what you have said. When we struggle against male violence it's also gender equality that we are fighting for. Feminist approach acknowledges the fact that every woman is unique in her story, needs and demands. I know these are two different concepts, but I would like to know what you think about each woman being unique especially in terms of social work."

Rosa Logar: I fully agree that every woman is unique in their story, needs and demands. And this understanding has to be the center of all communication in our interventions. I also think that it is a principle of democracy and human rights because, as you know, systems that are undemocratic and authoritarian see people as masses. They see people as masses that they can control and manipulate, and the individual does not have any weight. That is why we have to lift our weight as individual persons. Individual persons are making this world. So, I completely agree that this unique experience of every woman is also the principle of the women's movements and that we have to respect a woman's decision on whether she wants to leave the violent husband or not. We certainly tell her "Listen, we have a bad feeling that you might be beaten up again tomorrow." We respect her decision if she does not want to divorce. And we do not stop acting in solidarity with her or supporting her if she decides to stay with the violent partner. We come across these kinds of oppression in the social work system a lot. Women face a kind of pressure to leave the violent partner. The paradox is that after they do that, then they have to come together with the violent husband because of the children and they have to guarantee the violent husband can have contact with the children. What the system wants from women is very paradoxical. What it requires from women is almost impossible to fulfill. The young women are wonderful, very important for the movement. Of course, there are many young women in the movement. It is my goal as the director of the office and also it is my political goal to create work not only in terms of activism, we also have to live on something. We also need to create new jobs. We have many wonderful gender studies experts who cannot do their jobs because there are no jobs available. We need to create jobs in Austria. Now, for instance, we have formed this alliance free from violence, it is an alliance of women and migrants and human rights

organizations for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention. We have demanded from the government 270 million euros for the protection of women and girls from violence. It is a huge sum compared to what they are spending currently. But we think that this money is needed, and we are also demanding 3000 jobs for women who work in violence prevention. We cannot even imagine how much progress we could make. In Turkey, we need 30,000 jobs to fight for freedom from violence.

Tülin Semayiş: Last question. “Dear Rosa, thank you very much. I missed you. This is a great gathering. I want to ask you about the law on coercive control. Is there such a proposition in Austria? Why did France and England feel the need to come up with such a law given the existence of the Istanbul Convention? We started to hear about these developments here in Turkey as well. I would very much like to hear what you have to say about these developments? Thank you very much.”

Rosa Logar: Thank you. I think Liz will probably talk about coercive control. We do not have a specific coercive control regulation in Austria, but of course, psychological violence such as threats or coercion is criminalized in the penal code. So, to force someone to do something or not to do something is a criminal act in our criminal code. You can be punished for threatening to beat or kill someone even if you didn't do it. To threaten to kill someone is a serious criminal act, and, at least, we have some elements addressing that. But maybe we will have to work more on this issue in the future. And I am also curious so maybe you can ask this question to Liz. I am curious to hear about it. Thank you all very much for your attention.

Tülin Semayiş: We would like to thank you for this informative and great presentation. Thank you again for being here with us and strengthening our feminist solidarity.



PANEL 1:
FEMINIST
APPROACHES
TO SOCIAL
WORK

Leyla Soydinç: Our first panel is titled “Feminist Approaches to Social Work” and our first speaker in this panel is Liz Kelly. Liz Kelly discovered the Women’s Liberation Movement in 1973 and then onwards her life changed radically. She was one of the founding members of the shelter (refuge), rape crisis center and women centers in Norwich, UK, in the 1970s and fighting violence against women has been the focus of her feminist life ever since. In her influential 1988 book *Surviving Sexual Violence* she introduced the concept of “continuum” to describe violence against women. Since 1987, she has been a part of the Child and Woman Abuse Studies Unit—the only MA program focusing on child and woman abuse—in London Metropolitan University. We would like to thank her once again. The floor is yours Liz.

Liz Kelly: Thank you. I am really honored to be at your conference. More than 20 years ago I was working for the Council of Europe with Canan, who I know was involved in the establishment of Purple Roof, so this feels like a circle of feminist connection.

My presentation is focused on feminist support work as an aspect of social work. I would like to start with where we began in creating this new approach in the 1970s. Our origins are an important reference point we should never forget. We began telling our own stories to each other in consciousness raising groups, in our own grassroots organizations. There we understood the importance of being able to name violence, being able to speak about it and being able to question the shame and self-blame that all human cultures seem to place on women and girls when they are experiencing violence—all forms of violence not just domestic abuse. This was where the personal is political began, and we named these as crimes of power, of power over, the English word for that is dominion.

It was through that talking we began to create what did not exist: the shelters, the helplines, all the other forms of support that we have developed since. All those responses began from a culture of belief: we believed what women were telling us. We also built a culture of care and new ways of working that were linked to activism. We tried to have flat organizations in order not to reproduce hierarchies. Later, we began to think about the differences between women, power relations within our groups, racism, anti-lesbianism, the ways in which disabled women are not able to access services unless we make sure our services are accessible to them.

The key thing here is that we created all of this within a culture of a collective “we”: that violence affects us all as women, that we move between being the supported and the supporter, that these are not fixed positions, and that every woman could be a supporter and every woman could be in need of support. One of the questions I ask in teaching and in presentations is whether, over the last 20 years, we have lost the “we”. That professionalization of services often required by funders and sometimes

required by governments has removed some of that profound sense of a collective that we began with. We developed our services in dialogue with the women we were supporting. They helped us understand what it was they needed and wanted. We stand alongside women, provide them with the support and the information so that they make their decisions. Over 30 years ago, Judith Herman in her book *Trauma and Recovery* talked about activism being part of dealing with the harms of violence, and I wonder how much we still work with that idea.

This connects to how we position ourselves in relation to the category of survivor. It used to be very common in conferences, in meetings, that we placed ourselves within that category. I think that professionalization has encouraged us not to do identify with that category, not to say that many of us who started and continue to do this work are ourselves survivors. There was something important about that because we were visible, we were speaking and building organizations. We were an embodiment, if you like, of a person who wants to make a change in the world and who has this history. There were connections between those who were working to make a change and those who needed support.

We have also been challenged for three decades by black feminists and by feminists with disabilities to ask the question of who is not here yet. If there are groups of women who were not here yet, who were not accessing support, who were not choosing to work in support services, that we need to ask why they are not here, what are the barriers?

I use the following quote from Kathleen Barry a lot, whilst it is about rape, it applies to other forms of violence and takes what I have been saying a step further:

“Redefining rape, demanding recognition of women’s victimization has led to the creation of a new status – the victim. The status of this role is awarded according to the nature and extent of the abuse the woman suffered. Creating the role and status of the victim is the practice I call victimism. A woman ... finds she can only be understood if she takes on the role of the victim, she is assigned victim status and then seen only in terms of what has happened to her... It creates a framework for others to know her not as a person, but as a victim, someone to whom violence has been done. Victimism is an objectification which establishes new standards for defining experience, those standards dismiss any question of will, and deny that the women even whilst enduring sexual violence is a living, changing, growing, interactive person.” (Barry, 1979, p.38-9)

She alerts us to the concept and the practice of victimism which is to only see a woman through what has been done to her. She is only understood as a victim, someone to whom the violence has been done. She argues

that this is an objectification and that how we understand and think about victims suggests that a woman is not someone who survived, who is a living, changing, growing, interactive person. For me, the foundation of the feminist support work is that we see and treat women as women, not as victims: we do not position her as less than us. This is what I want us to think about.

Another quote I work with a lot is from philosophy professor Susan Brison, who survived a brutal sexual violence whilst on holiday in France. Her book *Aftermath* is a reflection on the philosophy of the self through her experience of being a survivor. “I develop and defend a view of the self as fundamentally relational—capable of being undone by violence, but also of being remade in connection with others.” (Brison, 2001, pxi)

The idea of being undone by violence but being remade in connection to others is the foundation of feminist support work. We provide spaces in which women can remake themselves in connection with us and other survivors.

We need to think philosophically about what violence is and what violence does. It removes agency and control over one’s body and mind, but not entirely. Women and children are not passive victims, they find resources to cope and survive. Feminist practice is about restoring that control, expanding what I call women’s “space for action”. This is not just about safety: domestic violence narrows how women think and act, our work is to expand space so women can make choices not just in relation to their safety but their whole life. In our support work we explore how the violence has changed a woman’s sense of self, her relations to others and her economic position. This is not just about safety but her sense of who she is, who she can be, who she wants to be. Taking this position means we need think about language: what do the words women, children, victims, survivors, service users mean and communicate? How we see and treat women has an impact on how women conceive their selves, and on their own capabilities going forward. In feminist support work we do not speak of or treat women as clients as in traditional social work.

The Istanbul Convention gives us a framework for thinking about support: it should begin from a gendered understanding within a “culture of belief” which prioritizes “the human rights and safety of the victim” and aims for “empowerment”, including “economic independence”. Human rights framing stress dignity, privacy, and bodily integrity and what many call “self-determination”. The Convention includes support counselling and advice, financial assistance, health care, housing, legal rights, employment and training and other forms of social welfare provision.

I want to end with some reflections from the CEINAV project, done with colleagues from Germany, Malta, Portugal, and Slovenia. We built a set

of transnational ethics of support work with survivors of violence who are minoritized, recognizing that we are encountering complex intersections of power relations—gender, class, generation, race and ethnicity, disability, faith, nationality, migrant status. We need to have all of these in mind when we step into other women’s lives. Everything that we do and say can contribute to the connection that Susan Brison talks about.

All intervention should begin from a recognition that every subsequent interaction can re-stitch social connections or compound harms of violence. The principle of respecting dignity that we see in the Istanbul Convention means we should see women and girls as knowers: they know about their own experience, and they know about their own situation. We may know what their rights are and what the possibilities for change are. These knowledges need to meet and be explored together. It is very easy to make women and children feel responsible. Traditional social work often makes women responsible for the safety of their children, what is sometimes called “responsibilization”. As feminists we have to avoid making women feel responsible for their own safety or that of their children.

As part of this work, we questioned the social work principle of cultural competence: it is impossible in diverse societies, recognizing that there are many differences in every country, to be competent about all of that. Rather we need to be open and curious to knowing from those we are supporting, we need to be curious about how they got to be in this place. And we need to not attribute culture only to certain groups, we all come from cultures, often multiple cultures. And one of the things that we found in this project was the professionals in a number of countries talked about migrants and minoritized women as being more likely to accept abuse, of not understanding it was wrong. That was not what we found when we talked to survivors themselves. They were really clear about it, they thought it should not be happening. What they didn’t know and they didn’t have necessarily was the trust that they could do something about it. That is not the same as accepting abuse.

And in the UK we have had a long tradition of minoritized women developing what they call “by and for” services. They are services by women from those communities for women from those communities. And it’s really clear that for minoritized communities those kinds of services create a space to speak and they are places to be seen and to belong. You don’t have to anticipate that there might be racism. You are actually able to speak about what has happened to you more. You are able to reach to the process of mutual support more.

One of the other things that become very clear over the last couple of years is in the work you are doing with migrant women, women who have complicated immigration status, women who also have to face racism

directed against themselves and their children, and there is additional work, additional layers of support that need to be placed. And it's talked about by black sisters, one of our longstanding by and for groups, case work plus, plus, plus. And that is often not recognized by funders when they are allocating resources. They think there is a one size fits all model of support. And that is not the case.

And so, what I'm saying about what feminist support work involves in this perspective is that we need to be hearers, and to listen louder and to understand from someone else's perspective. That in turn places the woman or the girl in the position of the knower. They are the holder of the knowledge about their history, about their social location, about their experiences. It is a process of conversation that we work out what their needs might be and what their concerns and fears may be about engaging with other services, especially with the state.

I think we do now know what matters to women and girls in terms of support and it matters that we enable them to name the violence and abuse. Not name it for her but be in a conversational process where she can name it herself. That we create a space in which she can explore the issues without self-blame and stigma, and the meanings of particular kinds of violence. To experience sexual violence is a secret thing and it has it's specific and complicated meanings. And we give a clear message that they are worth more than the abuse and that they deserve the support that we are offering. And we provide space for them to explore what this violence means, how it has changed the sense of who they are, their sense of what their future might be and then what are the implications of doing x or y might be. And in doing so, we are creating safety in the sense of it is safe to speak about those things. They do not have to be hidden, what they have been through do not have to diminish who they are in the eyes of someone else. And to start to redevelop that trust in others. And part of that is not to treat someone as a victim, but to see and treat them respectfully as a whole person. The violence is a part of what has happened to them, it is not everything about them or their lives. And in doing this we are part of restoring control for her over her body and over her life. We are creating a space in which it is possible to remake yourself as Susan Brison said.

Leyla Soydinç: Thank you very much for your presentation, Liz. Your tackling of social work from the lens of feminist support work has offered us a beautiful approach and a ground to work on. Thank you again for your words. Our second speaker is Britta Schlichting. Britta was born in 1977. She finished her studies in the field of Social Work. Since 2002 she is working with the feminist association Frauen helfen Frauen e.V. Heidelberg, which is also the sponsor of the Autonomous Women's Refuge. She is offering advice and support for women and their children affected by violence. Since

2018 she had been in collaboration with the Central Information Network of Autonomous Women's Shelters (ZIF). She undertakes the coordination and political representation of the autonomous women's shelters nationwide. ZIF is a member of the nationwide alliance of NGOs formed for the Istanbul Convention.

Britta Schlichting: In this presentation, I would like to talk about the Central Information Network of Autonomous Women's Shelters (ZIF), explaining the guidelines that we adopt in our work and outlining the feminist fields of action of the autonomous women's shelters that are affiliated with us in Germany, i.e., describing the criteria according to which we work. Then I would also like to present some best practice examples of both the ZIF as an umbrella organization of autonomous women's shelters and individual women's shelters affiliated with us.

The ZIF was founded in 1980, emerging from within the women's movement. After the first autonomous women's shelters had been created in Germany, it became clear that we needed a network that would work according to feminist criteria and connect the different shelters. Today, the ZIF is the voice of about 100 autonomous women's shelters on a national political level. Our main focus is on public relations, alliance work and lobbying. The ZIF coordinates and moderates the political and conceptual relationships between the autonomous women's shelters, both externally and internally. The ZIF is politically and denominationally independent and financed exclusively through membership fees and donations. It remains financially independent of the governmental funding agencies and thus secures its political freedom.

To emphasize the approaches that we and our affiliated women's shelters adopt, I would like to present our guidelines. Of course, each local women's shelter ultimately works independently, but these are the general criteria that shape our work and our attitude. These criteria include feminist attitude, anti-racism and anti-discrimination, autonomy and self-determination, help for self-help and empowerment, partiality, participation, and "living diversity- demanding inclusion".

I will now go into some of these guidelines in more detail. I would like to start with the feminist attitude. At the beginning I already mentioned where we come from, but perhaps we might want to recall once again what Liz Kelly also emphasized in her speech. Our feminist work in the women's shelter supports the women affected by violence in their efforts to regain the power to define their lives, their roles as women, and their images of women. They are the experts of their lives. By creating public awareness of the existing social, societal, structural, and political conditions that cause and promote violence against women and girls, we are also taking on an important socio-political task. Violence is not the problem of individual

women but has its roots in the existing patriarchal social structures which promote and trigger power and violence.

The next aspect is anti-racism and anti-discrimination. We are aware that we as employees in the autonomous women's shelters are not free of discrimination and racism, but we are continuously working to understand and eliminate different forms of discrimination and oppression. The autonomous women's shelter movement, as Liz also mentioned, has gone through quite painful processes. In the past, white German feminists have tried to define what is right and wrong, overlooking the fact that women with migration experiences simply have a very different experience or, in other words, have different experiences of structural violence. This is an intensive process that is still ongoing. That is why it is important to us that we within the autonomous women's shelters—i.e., residents, children, and the staff—constantly engage in educational and reflective work that is both critical of racism and non-discriminatory, and that we remain wary of this issue both inside and outside our institutions.

Next comes autonomy and self-determination. In the women's shelter, we have to make sure that the dominance of the woman's violent partner is not replaced by dominance and paternalism on the part of the institution. In other words, we as staff members, should not behave as if we would know what is right and what is wrong and what is good and what is bad for the woman, because this is exactly the pattern she knows from her violent relationship. We have to be very conscious about not perpetuating such a dynamic. Violence and dominance are represented, supported, and perpetuated by hierarchical organizational structures. That is why the teams in autonomous women's shelters work on the basis of self-determination and equality and without formal internal hierarchies, i.e., the idea of autonomous women's shelters is to work without leadership, but to distribute power and decision-making and responsibility equally among all. Of course, involvement of the residents is crucial to avoid reproducing the power hierarchies that exist in the outside world.

Another important issue is support for self-help and empowerment. For us, empowerment in the context of women's shelter work means supporting women in determining their own destiny and realizing it at their own pace and by their own efforts. As I have already mentioned earlier, the woman is the expert when it comes to her life. We want women to empower themselves by giving them access to resources and information and chances for participation. We do not want to look at them as victims who do not know what is right for themselves. Instead, we seek their empowerment together with the women and endeavor to enable them so that they can decide for themselves.

The last principle I would like to mention is partiality. Taking sides and

showing solidarity with women and children is a fundamental part of our work. All of us who work there are women and we are all affected by patriarchal power structures. Of course, some of us are more privileged than others or our access to resources is differential, but we consider ourselves as a community of solidarity. Women who seek shelter at an autonomous women's shelter do not have to prove that they have been exposed to violence. Women have the power to define. We empower them in saying that they have experienced violence, because some women say, "He didn't hit me, he just called me names." We say, "That is violence, too, and it is a reason, of course, for you to find shelter with us."

We see children in women's shelters as independent personalities with their own interests, needs, individual strengths and abilities and we support and encourage them with respect to their rights.

In other words, children are not seen as an appendage. We do not only work with or support women. Children also have their own contact persons who are responsible for them and who empower the children to find a language for them to express their experiences and support them in articulating their interests and wishes to their mothers.

After this brief introduction, drawing on our guidelines, I would now like to present autonomous women's shelters' feminist fields of action in greater detail. On the one hand, I would like to explain how our guidelines work or manifest on the inside, and on the other hand, I would also like to point out how they radiate toward the outside. So, in the women's shelters which are workplaces, as I noted earlier, we work without management, we self-administer without leadership. The women's shelters implement this principle in different ways. In the women's shelter where I worked, for example, we distributed the management tasks among our colleagues. One person was responsible for public relations, another for personnel, and another for data protection. We reflect on this distribution of tasks once a year and we can then redistribute these areas of responsibility. Instead of majority decisions we favor decisions taken by consensus because we are convinced that a decision is only sustainable if all opinions are taken into account and that we must involve everyone.

When hiring new colleagues, we get together as a team and try to assess our needs collectively before selecting the right candidate. Together we try to understand both the skills and qualifications we need and what we expect from the new colleague. We select new colleagues together in order to guarantee diversity in our team. Of course, this is more easily done in large cities than in women's shelters in rural areas since simply there are not as many applications or as many women who want to work there. Nevertheless, we always try to be very conscious when hiring new staff.

We also make sure that everyone shares the responsibility for financial matters and that everyone has a say in the decision-making process. Of course, there is someone who mainly does the administration and finances and brings in the necessary expertise, but all of us, including those who work with the women and children, have the financial concerns of the women's shelter in mind. Moreover, it is important to us that everyone is paid equally, in other words, we give importance to everyone being paid according to the same rate, whether it be the woman who looks after the finances, who works with the women, who works with the children or who is responsible for the house maintenance and housekeeping works.

Another aspect concerning our internal affairs concerns the residents, i.e., women and children. We have a house meeting once a week and a children's meeting during the same hours. This is the case in most women's shelters. Here, the women come together as a living community with shared responsibilities to discuss any issues they are concerned with. Another key aspect here is the assumption of responsibility by the residents. Again, we don't perceive the women as victims. They are the experts of their lives. They determine their own paths, and it does not matter in which direction they go.

Another example is the design of our house rules. We always involve the residents, asking them, "How would you do this, how would you arrange that?" or "What should we do if a woman breaks the rules, violates the principle of anonymity or makes racist comments?" Instead of simply saying "This is how things are", we want to enter into a dialogue with the women and exchange ideas on these topics. And a women's shelter is, of course, always a place of conflict. Everyone working in a women's shelter probably knows that. Conflicts are an inevitable part of life. We want to empower the women as well as ourselves so that we can solve conflicts in a manner different than the ways that they are used to from their previous relationships where the opinion of the supposedly stronger party was taken to be the right one.

Now I would like to give a few best practice examples as far as our external work is concerned. In our external work, too, always keeping our guidelines in mind, we try to use our actions to convey these guidelines to the outside world. In this context, I would like to present a project which is based on the simple idea of conveying knowledge to the outside world through prevention. We do this in our "Heartbeat" workshop, which is carried out by the women's shelter in Heidelberg. The goal of this project is to teach teenagers and young adults the skills necessary for having positive experiences in an equal love relationship. We work with both women and men and we want to empower them in such a way that they can recognize warning signs of violence in relationships early on. We want to equip them with the skill

to deal with relationship conflicts without resorting to violence, because yes, relationship conflicts are normal. We also give them information on where they or their friends can get help if they want to get out of a violent relationship or change their behavior in relationships.

With regard to the warning signs, we try to engage the young individuals in discussion, for example, about what happens if my boyfriend does not want me to have contact with my ex-boyfriend or if he does not want me to wear a short skirt or to go out in the evening. Are these warning signs already? We ask them to show a red card for “Yes, warning sign”, yellow for “So-so”, and green for “No”. Then we discuss our opinions, because they naturally raise their cards in different order. All in all, this is a very nice way of exchanging ideas with young individuals about boundaries in relationships and about where everyone’s boundaries are.

The next example concerns empowerment. As ZIF, we published a nationwide website in May of this year where women can search for available places in women’s shelters. We want to put women who are experiencing violence in the center of our thinking and make sure that they can decide for themselves, if they want to, and that they have an overview of where they can go and what options they have, so that they do not necessarily have to rely on getting support from others. Of course, we still provide counseling. The women’s shelters are willing to provide advisory support and this certainly is of great importance, but for women who want to get an overview on their own, and especially for all employees in women’s shelters and in counseling centers, it is also important to finally have a tool to see the availabilities.

We also attached great importance to including the accessibility of women’s shelters, which is very poorly developed area in Germany. Women or staff members at women’s shelters can select admission criteria. For instance, there might be a woman with two children who has a walking disability and a pet and is looking for a shelter about 200 km from her home. If these criteria are entered accordingly the search results will appear on the website. The green women’s shelters popping up are those that are available. The white ones do not indicate whether they are admitting anyone or not. The red ones are occupied. And the brown and blue shelters are available for immediate admission. There are some women’s shelters in Germany where women are admitted 24/7 and from there women can later go to the next free women’s shelter. The web site is financed solely through donations.

Now I would also like to briefly address the ZIF’s public relations work. In the course of the federal elections, which took place in Germany in September 2021, we created a video explaining our demands regarding how we think women’s shelters should be financed. We paid great attention to ensure a very diverse representation of women in this video and, above

all, we demand funding that is independent of individual cases, so that all women have access to women's shelters, to protection, guidance, and support at all times.

Another example that I would like to refer to has to do with networking, namely a model regarding custody and access rights in cases of violence against women, which has now become a major beacon in Germany. In Munich, Bavaria, representatives from the judiciary, police, women's shelters, counseling centers and other projects have formed an alliance called "Active Against Male Violence", which has developed a guideline on how to deal with custody and access rights proceedings in the context of violence. Safeguarding the well-being of the child and protecting the woman have absolute priority according to this guideline. We know that the issue of custody and access rights is a problem throughout Europe, and that the man's access to his wife and children is a recurring theme. The alliance has developed a guideline that the court follows, and this is really considered a great example of best practice, which they are also trying to establish in many other cities. It simply shows that it is good when everyone comes together and pulls in the same direction and when the judiciary is on board as well.

Another example in terms of networking is that ZIF is part of the Istanbul Convention Alliance. The Istanbul Convention came into force in Germany in 2018. In September 2020, Germany sent its state report to GREVIO, and then in March 2021, we sent our alternative report to GREVIO. We have an impressive alliance of over 20 NGOs at the federal level working on the issue of violence. We try to be very diverse there as well, giving more weight to the opinion and expertise of organizations that represent minorities or at least making sure that their opinion and expertise is always included. In our recommendations, we always take into account the perspective of marginalized women, i.e., women who are in precarious situation in terms of residence, women with a migration history, women with disabilities, and trans women, and try to pay particular attention to these varying experiences.

Leyla Soydinç: Thank you, Britta. Next, we will listen to Açelya Uçan from Mor Çatı Women's Shelter Foundation. Açelya Uçan graduated from the Sociology Department of Ege University in 2008. In 2011, she completed the General Sociology and Methodology Master Program of the Sociology Department of the same university with her dissertation focusing on the ways in which women who stay in shelters or women's shelters perceive stigmatization. Following her MA studies, her interest in combatting violence against women, feminist social work, and social policies in Turkey paved the way for her encounter with Mor Çatı. Since 2011 she has been a part of the fight against violence against women as a Mor Çatı volunteer and she is currently working as the Program Coordinator. She also carried

out additional work on gender equality, child rights, and refugee rights in various NGOs.

Açelya Uçan: In order to combat violence against women, in its shelter and solidarity center, Mor Çatı works in solidarity with the women who has been exposed to violence. What lies at the foundation of the solidarity formed with the women are the support mechanisms necessary for the empowerment of women who has been exposed to violence. This experience of forming one-to-one solidarity with the women who has been exposed to violence makes it possible for us as Mor Çatı to identify the forms of violence, to specify how violence affects women, and to understand the specific needs of women. Additionally, we get a chance to collect the responses women could or could not get from the institutions that they had applied to before reaching Mor Çatı and get experienced about the effects of these responses in combatting violence against women. Mor Çatı, in articulating it political discourse, sets off from the monitoring done to understand this experience. It is possible to say that solidarity with women constitutes the backbone of the works carried out by Mor Çatı. Reflecting and speaking on the commonalities and differences in women's experiences, on knowledge about the contexts in which women's experiences differ, and on the different effects of good and bad practices is crucial when developing and implementing our policies.

I would like to talk a bit about the current social policies and available services in the field of combat against violence against women before moving on to the details of the kind of work Mor Çatı carries out. Although it seems like there are certain right-based approaches that focus on empowerment, what we learn from the women at Mor Çatı suggests that official institutions and organizations frame the services that they are legally obliged to provide to women as "aid". A large part of the social work in the field of combat against violence against women is carried out by the state institutions and organizations affiliated with local administration and the mainstream approach to social work feeds on this aid-oriented understanding and is structured on specialist-victim relationship. For sure, there are social workers who focus on the empowerment of women in these institutions. However, the "aid-based" approach and the kind of services that the institutions provide are not clearly defined and this, especially in official institutions and organizations, leads to arbitrariness and thwarts the services offered to be seen as a legal right by the women who are most of than not are apprehensive about applying to these institutions. Since the implementation practices are not solidly structured, the services provided are left to the "benevolence" of the service providers. In turn, it is expected for the women who receive the service to feel gratitude, not to ask for more, and to be "the acceptable victim". What is at stake here is that this approach to social work does not see women as the subjects who are to realize the change about their own lives. As a result of lack of

planning in this direction women end up applying to the institutions over and over again and find no permanent solutions.

The services provided at the municipality level also for the most part are quality-wise similar. There are serious issues with regards to the structure of the social policy which is based on aid relationships and in terms of the institutionalization and sustainability of the already established support systems that address violence against women. We see that the steps taken in the direction of combating violence against women at the municipality level fail to be permanent and sustainable when the mayor, administrators or other decision makers change even if the political party in power in the municipality level remains in office.

Broadening the field of social policy in a way to include everyone, operationalizing it in a way to address the gender-based discrimination so that it would benefit the women, and taking steps to effect change by way of the feminist critique of social policy will ensure that the support that women receive will result in effective changes. We believe in a form of social policy which involves a liberatory perspective and which do not leave women alone in their efforts to overcome the social and economic effects of male violence and in need of temporary support. Under the conditions where equality mechanisms function in every area of life, it will be possible for women to build their lives free of violence.

In our work we carry out at Mor Çatı, besides utilizing the principles and knowledge provided by social work, we adopt an approach that is shaped by women's experiences and feedbacks. What renders this work unique are the relationships established, the solidarity formed between the women who provide support and the women who receive support, and the space created in and through these interactions. The work carried out at Mor Çatı points at and emphasizes solidarity, learning from each other's experiences, and getting stronger through these interactions. Part of our work also involves not only providing the women who receive support the information they need, but also to talk to them about violence, the source of violence, the fact that we are exposed to violence not because of something we do or do not do, but because we are women, the purpose for which men perpetrate this violence, the feelings such as guilt and helplessness triggered by violence. The knowledge which is based on this experience is the source of our feminist politics that affects the lives of all women. We know that we are strengthened and empowered together against male violence thanks to learning from each other.

I would like to elaborate a bit more on the kind of support we provide in one-to-one solidarity with women at Mor Çatı. All the tools of patriarchy reduce women's power and prevent them from becoming empowered. And we know very well that male violence is one of the most powerful tools

of gender-based discrimination. Thus, the support provided is planned by focusing on the question of which steps should be taken so that women can realize their power and potential and see beyond the limited options offered to them. The support offered to women who apply to Mor Çatı because of the violence they have been exposed to is shaped through a unique space where women can tell their stories without being judged, receive information, and make decisions about their lives. This space can be created differently for each woman. For some women, it is created by removing the perpetrator of violence from the house, for some women by going to a shelter, for some women by hearing that what they are going through is not their fault, and for some women simply deciding on the next step they will take.

The initial encounter with the women who apply to Mor Çatı takes place when they arrive at the solidarity center. Although most of the time communication takes place over the phone, from time to time it can also take place via e-mail or face-to-face. With the pandemic, online tools have been used for interviews; and especially in cases where the woman is next to the perpetrator of violence, communication can also be established through methods such as transmitting some information via text messages or other messaging applications. What is common to all these interviews is the relationship established using these communication tools between the woman and the Mor Çatı volunteer. Irrespective of the tool that is being used, we experience that it is possible to create an environment for the realization of the principles I have just talked about. We not only share basic information with women, but also by making them feel their uniqueness and dignity, we aim to establish a bond between the woman who conducts the interview and the woman who receives support. We give importance to this bond which will strengthen the struggle for freedom from violence. It is also worth emphasizing that Mor Çatı does not work like an institution that provides social services and that since our priority is to produce feminist policies, we meet the requests within the limits of our own resources and sometimes refer the women who apply to Mor Çatı to other institutions in case of emergency. This way it becomes possible for us to work together with each woman, if they want to, and come up with a tailor-made support plan that considers their unique situation. That said, we think that a feminist social work should be like the work we carry out at Mor Çatı: a social work which recognizes gender inequality and the effects of violence, which is based on women's solidarity, which involves providing support by considering the unique situation of each woman, and which always focuses on feminist policy making.

After understanding the needs and the plans of women, we refer them to the relevant supports. We encourage women to take the steps they see relevant for their own lives and if there are obstacles before accessing the support

they need, we think together about what can be done to overcome these obstacles and create change. With the support provided at the solidarity center, it can be possible for women to remove the perpetrator of violence from the house and not to go to the shelter, to see other resources they have or they can access, for example, it can be possible for women to live with their families, to rent a new house, to be supported to access social assistance, etc. It is also important for us to put pressure on the institutions that have a responsibility in combating male violence to fulfill their responsibilities. In so doing, it is important to reveal the problems of these institutions and to ensure that they take actual steps for solving these issues so that not only the women with whom we establish solidarity at Mor Çatı but all women in need of these institutions can benefit from the services as they should.

Our shelter is one of the spaces where we maintain solidarity with women. The solidarity built with women in the shelter adopts the principles I have just talked about. The shelter is a place where women who have been subjected to male violence can stay with their children, if they have any, receive the support they need to establish an independent life away from violence and its effects, and build solidarity with other women. Additionally, shelters play an important role in ensuring the safety of women and children in cases where the perpetrator of violence does not stay away due to the gaps and inadequacies in the system. That said, those staying in the shelter are not only women and children whose safety is at risk. It is also an important mechanism for women who feel powerless due to systematic violence, whose ties with social resources have been severed, and who have difficulty in maintaining their independent lives due to psychological effects of violence. At the Mor Çatı shelter, we endeavor to ensure that women can stay away from violence and its effects, take control of their own lives, and make their own decisions.

Women and children lead a common life in the shelters. Their experiences of communal and shared living differ according to the conditions of the shelters. These shared living conditions can be challenging for women, especially when combined with the heavy rules in the state shelters. In Mor Çatı shelter, there are not such coercive rules, but there is still a need to work on communal living. It is especially empowering for women whose social relations have been harmed due to the effects of male violence and who feel lonely to support each other in this sense. Therefore, what we understand from solidarity is not a relationship where there are no conflicts or no problems stemming from sharing a common life. This not possible in the shelter, just as it is not possible in our own living spaces and social circles. In this sense, it is possible to manage crises and strengthen solidarity by carrying out work aimed at organizing and supporting dynamics of the common life in the shelter.

When we look at how the Mor Çatı shelter function, we come across two rules: Confidentiality and nonviolence. Confidentiality is an indispensable principle for ensuring security. However, to ensure this, we do not use methods such as restricting women and children from leaving the house or using communication tools or having a security guard on duty at all times. Women and children staying in the Mor Çatı shelter are informed in detail about why the location of the shelter is confidential, the measures that should be taken to ensure confidentiality, the measures that should be taken and the safety plan that should be made according to the women's specific situation. This information is revisited whenever needed. Staff is present in the shelter only on weekdays and during working hours, but all women have their own phones and there is a 24/7 hotline which they can use to reach the shelter staff. Like all of us, all women and children in the shelter have the knowledge to call the priority numbers in case of an emergency. Women and children who take their own safety precautions can use this knowledge and experience after they leave the shelter. Our experience during the pandemic allowed us to see the positive aspects of this model in which women and children take responsibility for their own lives. During this period when shelter staff provided remote support without going to the shelter for a long time, we were able to continue without interruption the shelter work. The other rule, non-violence, involves women not inflicting violence on each other or on their children. Apart from these two rules, shelter staff and women and children who stay in the shelter decide together on all matters pertaining to their shared lives. The liberating shelter experience also has an impact on the lives women build after they leave the shelter. We see that women get empowered when it comes to see the risks, analyze, plan, and take control of and responsibility for their lives after their experience at the shelter.

The policies pursued to combat male violence in Turkey have a direct impact on the services provided to women. We observe that as the government gains power, it prioritizes the implementation of family-oriented policies, produces a political discourse accordingly, and proceeds step by step to this end. Mor Çatı's experiences show that the result of this policy is reflected the most in the attitudes of service providers, and that the backlash against the fight against violence against women and the misogynistic discourse gets institutionalized in bad practices. The most common malpractices we can count are: failure to ensure confidentiality and to take the necessary measures in the implementation of Law No. 6284, which is one of the most important tools in combating violence against women; decisions being made for short periods of time and without taking into account the unique needs of the woman; taking a long time to notify the perpetrator of violence; the failure of the local authorities to fulfill their responsibilities and the lack of necessary mechanisms to do so; temporary alimony and custody not being granted; the restrictive structure of the functioning of

shelters, which are far from liberating women; the lack of special social service mechanisms outside shelters; the absence of hotlines; the failure of ŞÖNİM, which was established for coordination, to fulfill this function; the failure of law enforcement officers to fulfill their duties; impunity in cases of violence against women; the excessively long duration of divorce cases; and the judgmental and accusatory attitudes and behaviors of service providers encountered in all relevant institutions. We know that existing legislation is not effective in implementation and in practice on account of the gaps in legislation and the attitude of service providers.

Turkey's decision to withdraw from the Istanbul Convention with a midnight decision resulted in a significant loss of rights in a country where the fight against violence against women is already complicated. The state failed to fulfill its obligations and duties in the fight against violence against women since the day the Istanbul Convention was signed. The legal gains we have achieved so far in the fight against male violence are less and less realized in practice.

We attach importance to carrying out our monitoring work and revealing the malpractices on the basis of what women share with Mor Çatı. In addition to the experiences women share with Mor Çatı, we conduct monitoring through tools such as meetings with institutions for women, visits to institutions, applications made for receiving information, mechanisms for complaint, workshops, trainings, experience sharing meetings, and relevant publications. We also carefully evaluate not only the channels in and through which the information we obtain as a result of monitoring will be shared, but also how it will be shared. Besides sharing this information with the women who apply to Mor Çatı to empower them, we also make it public through written materials, social media, traditional media, meetings with students or other organizations, workshops, monitoring reports, shadow reports, international reports, court reports, and feminist platforms.

As a feminist women's organization, we know that ending male violence is only possible by ensuring gender equality. As we contribute to the struggle, we aim to create channels that will strengthen women's solidarity and empower them by revealing how the process works in practice and its effects. Although the current situation is alarming, women continue to struggle for their lives and freedoms. As Mor Çatı, we draw strength from this struggle.

Leyla Soydinç: I will try to collect and then direct the questions to our speakers. I will begin with the questions for Liz. First question: I think one of the ways of not naming women as victims is to concentrate on men as perpetrators. Unfortunately, we do not have national perpetrator programs for men in Turkey, and having been working on that issue, what would you suggest? Thanks.

Liz Kelly: I think for a long time it has been the view that the only thing that we should be doing is group work for men and that is beginning to shift a little bit here in the UK. There are lots of different approaches being tested at the moment. One that I found very interesting was called Protecting Change. And this was people who have expertise working with perpetrators and having a conference with police, prevention, social work, drug and alcohol services. They sat in a room and did information sharing in real time. Each agency was in touch with their own database. They were sharing the information that they had about perpetrators who were identified as, the term is high harm, a lot of reports to the police, more than one victim which is appropriate in this context because it is police reports. And together they worked out the levers to influence his behavior. I have started to think that actually what we should be thinking about is how do we just as we seek to expand women's space for action, how do we narrow that of perpetrators. Criminal justice is only about one route, there are others. What are the ways in which we can stop the context that he is in, being one that allows him to perpetrate violence. So, it is not reliant on him choosing to change. It is actually thinking if we collectively focus on a perpetrator what are the levers that we can use to limit that behavior. So, I do think that is a role for behavior change organizations and work. But I think it is time to think a bit wider than that and to see whether there are resources in communities or employers. There is a range of possibilities that we have not really explored. So, thinking sideways about what other routes we have to influence the behavior of this person even if they themselves are not choosing to change.

Leyla Soydinç: Thank you very much Liz. There is another question, and maybe you would like to also talk about coercive control issue in your answer. In Turkey, one of the problems stemming from the traditional family order is that the lovers, the bosses, the husbands, the fathers of women are trying to control the lives of women by subjecting us to masculine violence, psychological and economic violence. The question asks what we should do about this issue.

Liz Kelly: I kind of wish I knew the answer. I do not know a perfect answer, but I do think that part of what I think is important about the concept of coercive control and also the legislation that we have had now for about two and a half years here in the UK is that it recognizes that this is a pattern of behavior. It is not individual incidents. And it is that pattern that entraps women and children. Actually, having a law which recognizes that specific pattern is actually really significant. And one of these things that has been developing here is a focus on economic abuse. One of my colleagues is the head of an organization called Surviving Economic Abuse. They have been doing really interesting work with banks and financial services to enable them to recognize when this is happening and to prevent women

being made responsible for what they call coercive death. Often when women separate the mechanism that perpetrators have to continue control her is through economics and finances. So, they have been developing a lot of work to limit the capacity of perpetrator to do that and they have a fantastic website with lots of resources. So I encourage if you put surviving economic abuse in the UK in a search engine, you'll find them. In terms of the particular context of Turkey, I really do not want to presume that I know what you should do in your own country. I think we learn from each other, and we pick up things and we adopt them to our own context. I think we all are working with cultures that have enabled and legitimized men's violence. It is not the case that we do not have any of that in the UK. I think it takes a slightly different form because we got a different history. We have a slightly less authoritarian government than you, but only slightly. So, we have to use the ideas and the practices in our own context and make them work in that context. It's a struggle, we are all involved in a struggle. Sometimes it is a less hard struggle and sometimes the context makes that struggle feel very difficult.

Leyla Soydinç: Thank you very much Liz. Before moving on to other speakers, there is one last question directed at you. "Do you do any work for social transformation, for example, for changing the language, like using the word survivor instead of the word victim? Do you think this will be beneficial for the elimination of sexual violence? And secondly, you've mentioned many different survivors' profiles. What is your perspective on trans women?"

Liz Kelly: The issue about language is a complicated one and I do not have a straightforward answer. In my writing these days I often use victim/survivors to recognize the two sides of the same experience. I think women make their own decisions about what words they want to use. Sometimes they just want to be seen as themselves, with their name and their social identity. Sometimes it is an important step for women to be able to name violence because naming violence means that you accept that you have been victimized and who did it is the victimizer. That is a big step and I think we have forgotten how a big a step that is sometimes for women because especially if it involves sexual violence and it was a partner. It is a big step actually to say that your partner has raped you, that your partner is a rapist. Part of what I was saying about creating spaces to speak and to think and to name is about creating spaces to do that. What my perspective is on trans women is such a big question. I of course think any trans women or trans men who has had an experience of violence should have access to services and support. It is a question whether those should be trans specific services which is what some trans people say that they want or whether they are integrated and how they integrated into existing services. And these things are matter of debate, we do not have an answer. We just have to be open to the conversation.

Leyla Soydinç: Thank you very much for your answers, Liz. Britta, there are many questions about the work you carry out at the shelters. I will list the questions. There is one question about the empowerment work you carry out with low-income women who stay at the shelters. There are other questions about how you ensure the safety of the shelters. There is a question about whether there is an age limit for boys in your shelters. In Turkey, for example, there is such an age restriction. There is an age limit of 12, not in the Mor Çatı shelter, but in the state shelters. I guess that is why this question came up. I see that you mentioned this database about the shelters in your presentation, there is a question about how you protect it from being hacked or attacked and the kind of security measures you use. One question asks about what you think about the issue of specialized shelters. Do you apply different shelter models? Are there different models addressing the needs of women who will receive support on security risks or other issues?

Britta Schlichting: Of course, we had many internal discussions regarding the security of the website. In two federal states, North Rhine-Westphalia and Hesse, we have already had such a site for many years and here, we were able to observe that the fears that existed before, for example that a house is green on the site and then a woman seeks refuge there and it suddenly turns red and the perpetrator says, "Oh, well, maybe that's where she went", that these fears have not come true. In Germany, the places, i.e., the cities or districts, in which women's shelters are located are usually well known because all women's shelters do local public relations and political work, prevention work, whether they are operated autonomously or not. So the vast majority of women's shelters have homepages, i.e., they can be found online. But it is very important to underline that women's shelters are free to decide whether they want to appear on our website. If a women's shelter is skeptical about the traffic light system, for example, they have the option to choose a white marker. Moreover, these markers do not necessarily have to directly pin the location of the shelters, but the shelters can move their marker in the city, e.g., to the train station or to the police station. Thus, their exact location is not revealed. We further run this website on a secure server and while we certainly monitor and evaluate this all the time, we have so far not had any negative experiences and not received any negative feedback from colleagues in other provinces, where these sites have been around for a while. But of course we are constantly aware of the potential security threats involved.

Another issue is the specialization of women's shelters. As Liz Kelly notes, this is a big discussion, for example in relation to trans women where we need to consider whether we need specialized services or if we rather say, "woman is woman, regardless of who she is". Some argue that we need specialized shelters only for women with disabilities, but this is not

the position taken by the autonomous shelters. We contend that women's shelters simply need to be better equipped so that they can offer every woman the space she needs.

This also ties in with the issue of age limits for boys, which every women's shelter in Germany handles very differently. Some allow boys up until the age of 12, some up to 13, and some up to 14. This largely depends on the structure of the women's shelter, i.e. how much space there is, if there are separate apartments for women who come with their children, so that the 17-year-old son does not have to share a bathroom with other women and children, etc. We think it is rather good if older sons can also stay at the shelters, because they, too, are affected by violence, but this certainly requires that the general conditions and the physical and structural conditions on site are adapted to the needs of the women and children who seek refuge there.

Speaking of security, I might add a few words about the general security of women's shelters. There is no security service in women's shelters. There are women's shelters that have surveillance cameras or some that have a gate or something similar. These are the shelters that are run by an association, not the autonomous ones. I believe that our approach to security is similar to that of Mor Çatı, in that we make it very clear to the women why anonymity is so important. And, of course, when a woman calls us and says she is looking for a place in a women's shelter, we first make a risk assessment with her to assess whether a place is safe enough for her. It is important for us that the women can participate in life, that they can go shopping, that they can go to the movies, that they can move freely in the city. And if a woman cannot do this in the city where the respective shelter is located, then we have to look for another place. She should be able to move freely. So, yes, the women's shelter is an anonymous place of refuge, but the woman must be free and able to go outside.

One important aspect that I quickly want to touch upon is the socio economic background of women. We know that violence leads to dependencies or that the women's financial resources are poor, either because they do not have access to money or they are not allowed to work. We draw attention to this issue especially in our political work by pointing out the different consequences of violence. Besides falling mentally ill, women might for example slip into poverty because they generally work in more precarious conditions. So we try to raise awareness about this issue on the political level but we also support women in practical terms. First of all, we are often concerned with ensuring the woman's livelihood, i.e., that she has access to social benefits. But then we also try to see whether she wants to work or receive vocational training. Then, of course, you have to look at whether the children are taken care of, whether there is all-day care for

the children. Another need is affordable housing. In Germany, affordable housing becomes less and less, so that women end up paying enormous amounts of money to rent a place, and here, too, we are politically committed to ensuring that there is affordable housing. And lastly, the financing of the shelters themselves. We hold the opinion that women's shelters must be financed independently of individual cases. Sometimes, where daily rates apply, women are added to the costs, which is pure madness. First she experiences violence and then she has to pay for it. This is due to our poor funding system in Germany. We have 16 federal states and 16 different models of financing for women's shelters and for stays in women's shelters.

Leyla Soydinç: Thank you very much Britta. You have tried to cover as many questions as possible in your answer. Now I will list the questions directed at Açelya. The first question is as follows: As a social worker who is still in the supervision process at the very beginning of the road, I want to ask about what the work you mentioned covers? More precisely, are there any risks such as the solidarity perspective damaging the professional boundary between the client and the expert or creating secondary trauma in the expert? Or do you think such a boundary should be observed? If so, where should the boundary begin and end? Personally, the word solidarity sounds very good to me, but it also worries me a bit, I need more details. The next question is for all the speakers. What is your take on working with men?

Açelya Uçan: At Mor Çatı when we carry out social work, psychological work, or offer legal support, we try not to establish an expert-victim/counselee relationship with the women. We think a lot on this issue, and we say that we are building solidarity with women. That said, solidarity is a very broad concept. What each of us understands from solidarity vary greatly. Therefore, based on the type of work we carry out, I will narrow it down. When we build solidarity with women at Mor Çatı, we benefit from the knowledge and the principles provided by social work, but we try to benefit from it in way that empowers women. To begin with, our perspective on violence creates a common ground for us: we start with the fact that each of us is exposed to male violence because we are women, or as Rosa mentioned, the probability of us being exposed to violence is quite high because we are women. So, we share a common experience. However, we do not endorse or adopt an approach that says, "I also experience violence because I am a woman, so, let's talk about our experiences together." We try to build solidarity by maintaining certain boundaries and trying not to occupy as those who provide support the space that we try to open up for the women who apply for support. Borders enable us to do this. This question makes me think about what supports us the most and how we protect ourselves when building solidarity with women. I think, first of all, each of us knows very clearly what Mor Çatı can do, what we can do and what we cannot do when we build solidarity, and knowing this enables us to protect our

boundaries and makes us feel the power of a feminist organization behind us. It makes it possible for us to create a space of solidarity that you can build specifically for each woman. Another protective principle is to never make decisions on behalf of the women. We do not think that we can know better than them about their own lives, because each of us is an expert on our own lives, and so are the women who come to us. The woman receiving support ultimately knows what is best for her life and we provide support to bring that out. Therefore, it is possible to say that we never take the burden of the decisions taken by women. Apart from that, we often share with women that the responsibility for their lives and decisions lies with them. This also gives women a liberating space. Sometimes feminists outside Mor Çatı get angry with us. When we tell them these things, they say, "What do you mean, didn't you take the woman from there and take her to the shelter? Don't you take her to the shelter yourself?" They can ask questions like these. On the other hand, we think that this is also part of emancipation and of opening up a space for women to make decisions about their own lives. We also receive supervision support. Sometimes we create resources for this and get support from outside Mor Çatı, and at other times, in the absence of resources we create supervision mechanisms within ourselves. This definitely has protective aspects. We do not work with men, nor do we plan to do so. And we also have a problem with this being seen as a part of the fight against violence against women, as a channel through which the resources allocated to this struggle will be transferred. Because as far as we have seen, the work carried out with men worldwide does not yield positive results. In fact, the perpetrator of violence often does not take this responsibility; in fact, he thinks that what he does is not violence. There are very few men who acknowledge the violence they perpetrate, and of course it is important that they have access to mechanisms where they can get the support they need to change. However, when we look at the language and system established in Turkey, we see that there are approaches such as forced treatment. We do not think that this is related to the support that the very few men who can say "I have committed violent behavior and I want to change this behavior and I need support for this" will receive. In our opinion, male violence is not a disease and men who commit violence do not need rehabilitation. Because there is no situation to be rehabilitated. If this were the case, we would have to accept that one out of every two men we see on the street and around us has psychological problems and in need of rehabilitation or treatment. This is not the case. Unfortunately, the source of the violence perpetrated by men is gender inequality, which cannot be eliminated with a magic wand or a few sessions of support but requires a much more comprehensive struggle. We think that a more realistic perspective should be taken, and support should be planned accordingly. In our opinion, the most valuable tool in combating violence is to establish mechanisms to empower women.

Leyla Soydinç: Thank you very much Açelya. Britta this was a question directed at all the panelists. Would you like to add anything?

Britta Schlichting: One issue that I have left aside but which I briefly want to remark on is the perpetrators of violence. I think work with men is important, but I also think that feminist men have to do it. In Germany, we have a federal working group for work with perpetrators of domestic violence. We, as a feminist institution, were involved in developing the standards and we all agreed that work with perpetrators only makes sense if it is based on a feminist approach and if it recognizes the the patriarchal social structures. So there are different approaches to working with the perpetrators, but I am glad that we have a federal association here standing and fighting with us and also publicly saying, "We live in a patriarchy and men have to take responsibility and we have to work in a feminist way." And I think we have already achieved a lot here, but, again, I think this is not our work. Feminist men should take care of that.

Leyla Soydinç: Thank you very much Britta for your answer. Açelya, Liz and Britta, do you have anything to add?

Liz Kelly: I would like to say that I think work with men, work with perpetrators is not the responsibility of women's organizations. But it is the responsibility of a lot of state organizations. Particularly with social work, I think I can speak for the UK, but I know that it is similar in other countries, social work has end up focusing on women and making women responsible for their own safety and of their children. There is some work going on here in the UK to enable social workers focus more on the perpetrators. And if they want to keep women and children safe that should be the focus of their intervention. So, I absolutely agree that this is not the work of women's organizations but it should be the work and the focus of many other organizations.



PANEL 2:
INSTITUTIONAL
COORDINATION
PRACTICES ON
VAW

Selime Büyükgöze: In the second panel of our conference, we will talk about the Institutional Coordination Practices on Violence Against Women. Our first speaker is Marcella Pirrone. Marcella Pirrone is a lawyer expert in family law, women's and children's rights, violence against women and children, violence/harassment on the working place and the co-founder of two autonomous women's shelters in Italy. Since 2008, she has been working as the co-founder and member of the Italian National WSS Network D.i.Re and of the Women's Lawyer Group of D.i.Re – Donne in Rete contro la violenza (women network against VAW). She is a guest professor of "Criminal Law" at the University of Balzano, Faculty of Social Services. She also provides on-the-job trainings for those working in social services, health services and youth services, and for law enforcement and judicial personnel working in the fields of family law, juvenile criminal law, criminal law on violence against women and children, and violence in the workplace. She has been a WAVE member since 1998, WAVE board member since 2017, and the WAVE president since 2020.

Marcella Pirrone: I am here as a representative of a network, the Italian network D.i.Re: Donne in Rete contro la violenza, which is actually not a network of lawyers, it's a network of women shelters, of women run specialist services. I wish to say that specifically because that is very important that we are at the moment 81 women's organizations in Italy. Italy is quite a crowded country, we over 60-65 million people. So, 81 of our shelters spread all over Italy which are actually having these characteristic of acting according to feminist principles. Only women run, only for women and their children, for victims of violence against women and girls, male violence as we always prefer to say. So, we have an anti-violence center. It's not a shelter, it's an open address place where women can come, ask for help, and be counseled. In this network we have around 150 shelters all over Italy, which means there is a secret address where women can be safely hosted with their children. Italy has 20 regions and in its most regions we are supporting around 20.000 women per year. Italy started from the feminist movement to tackle violence against women and girls by voluntary projects in early 90's and we started then connecting with each other. Now we are 80. It was an informal network and then in 2008, after 20 years, we had the necessity to formulate it as an NGO because we started becoming of course a contractor with public tenders. As I said, absolutely the root is the feminism and we concern and we want not only to help every single women and their children but we want to bring cultural change concerning the problem of violence against women and girls. Because Italy is unfortunately quite known for having a very traditional and of course patriarchal culture. We were monitored by GREVIO and GREVIO described very well in its Italian report how these stereotypes and prejudices about the traditional role of women and men in family are absolutely characterizing every intervention in terms of violence. The Italian laws are not bad, Italy of course has a long juridical tradition.

They make very good laws, the laws are written well and we could also participate in some of the contents of the laws as of women's lawyers, D.i.Re lawyers movement. But the problem is the implementation and the culture, the cultural background where the laws have to be applied and how. And this is a common problem, not only in Italy. But I want to stress that out because sometimes our politicians and lawyers, legal experts say we have a wonderful framework but that's absolutely not enough. So, we do a lot of advocacy work. As D.i.Re, we do not provide the services, we are the network of the shelters. We do a lot of lobbying, political work, we try to participate in national and international projects, and we network on international bases. Of course, we are members of WAVE, EWL and of the global movement. We had of course the lockdown period. You might remember, Italy was the first European country to have a lot of deaths, a lot of Covid, and a lot of shocking situations. So, we are now doing quite well I must say sort of on the average of the other European countries. So, it's much better than a year ago. But this is just to show you how many women shelters of D.i.Re support in one month and how it increased during the lockdown. But at the same time, it increased a lot, and we know for the women first of all but also for the women's specialist services. But we have to realize for example what happened in Italy that there was a drop in new calls, new requests for help. So, the ones we were already in contact with could find contact, but a lot could not find contact for the first time they needed it. So, this is of course due to a lot of restrictions and difficult situations. So, what is this Centro Antiviolenza, which means anti-violence center? In Italy we started not following some models where the shelter is everything, the core of the intervention, everything we started deciding all over in Italy that we wanted a safe secret place for women which is of course the refuge but also that requires a lot of money. When we started, we never had money. The whole of the Italian feminist movement and the women's shelter movement did never have any money, public money. So, it all started with voluntary work. So, it was impossible to have with voluntary work, no money, a refuge. Unless someone would donate it but that was far away from the public awareness that violence is a problem that you have to tackle and donate something. So we started like everyone does when you have no resources but a lot of good and political will to do something to tackle this problem, we started first with phone lines, with giving numbers where the women could start asking for help, then we started being able to have some spaces where they could come and they were all public spaces so they could come and find experts and that's I want to underline. Being volunteers at that time, like now, did not mean that we were not experts. It was all very engaged women, very professional women who besides their ordinary jobs –lawyers, psychologists, social worker, sociologists– were engaging and giving their energy, their intelligence, their competence, political engagement to help to tackle this problem. So, in the early 90's it was totally ignored or not yet considered as important by any politician or by any public awareness. So,

it took us 30 years to make it a public problem and to know this has to be tackled and this is a public responsibility. And these shelters and centers could then grow. As I said, we have more than hundreds actually and there is this, I don't list all, but this is what is offered to the women and their children and also to every professional or every other person who wants to know more about this issue or wants to help someone whom she knows that is in a problem. So, this is what we give as you can read and the usual things which are provided. But this is very important that we provide them with a feminist approach, never gender neutral. That is absolutely to underline because we know how much nowadays this gender-neutral approach is, I would say like a virus going all over, coming everywhere, sneaking in and also finding a lot of space in public funds and public policies. This is one structure. We have the shelters as such which are the refuges which have a secret address for reasons of security/safety of course. And they offer 24-hour refuge and every day of the year. A woman really calls and is given a refuge, safety and what is again important specific professional help and its holistic approach. I mean we really try to give with these different places of our projects but also with these different professional competencies we really try to give the woman whatever she needs. It is certainly the place, the shelter plus the counseling center, however they are structured, they can be in the same place, they can be separate but what is important is the group of women who are working there, who are offering their competence as I said engagement and knowing what this means for women, to be known in a violent situation and putting the women at the center of intervention. That means the woman is the core. We always say the woman is the best expert of her situation. She has to be listened to, taken seriously and everything every step has to be done with her because she knows exactly what it was till today, what it is today and what happens if. So, we are certainly never, this makes a bit of a difference between feminist approach and a sort of gender-neutral approach or this sort of pietistic approach about talking about women as weak, victims and so on. We actually don't like the expression victim. Because we know women are incredibly strong to survive that for a long time and to manage to get out of it. That's why the right expression is that they are the survivors. And all survivors have to be taken seriously and they really know what they need to be helped for. This is what we try to really do in our projects, in our initiatives. And that's why I'm bringing you now an example, but it could be an example for many other places in Italy. It is about the network. We are specialists, we are experts in networking. When I say we, I mean women's movements, feminist movements. So, this has to be considered. This is an incredible competence, an incredible skill because we are willing to listen to others, to recognize others' competence, to learn, to grow together but specially to work together, to join our efforts, to join our intelligence in order to reach a common goal. And the common goal is really a life free of violence for every woman in our society but in this specific case for that single woman who comes that day

and tells us her story. So, we realized this is our practice, political practice of relationship between women and we have a relationship also with the one who comes to us. Political relationship of course I'm talking about. I'm talking about the feminist political relationship. So, when we started it not only being feminists in many issues and not only theoretically about many women's rights, we had in Italy very interesting battles in the 70's about divorce, abortion and so on. So that's what was nourishing our soul. We had to make this further step, which was to be operative, which was not only being, thinking, and creating culture and creating awareness but we had to really, in Italian we say we had to get our hands dirty. We had to go into the middle of the problem and really work at it with women suffering from it and not only hearing about it. So, we realize that we need to be strong, and we cannot do it alone. As much as we tell every single woman you cannot do it on your own because it's hard, it's incredible, you have an incredibly difficult situation and you can survive, you have been great in surviving till now but it's important not to be alone. And that's what we are trying to do. We realized we also cannot be alone. So, we started looking around, seeing who else is always going to be tackling this single situation. Where does the woman hit her head when she needs help? And, of course, we could immediately recognize that it was health services, social services, police, very often judges, and of course education, schools but mainly those ones I mentioned. And we also realized that every one of the single actors was tackling this problem with totally different approaches. If we can talk about the approaches I would say for long time with no approaches at all, improvising and bringing in whatever for by chance that single person who that woman would meet, could be a single doctor, could be a single policeman, a single social worker and there was actually not much distinction about being a woman or a man, how they have reacted, it was just a matter of luck. If the woman would get an adequate answer and most of the time it was never adequate because this is not a problem you can improvise and tackle with no professionalism. And that was the problem. All the people I mentioned in these areas were thinking, "Oh god, a woman who is in a violent situation." It's not professional, it's a sort of crime story, you have to be good. This was terrible. So, it took decades to realize this is a serious professional problem. It requires professional competence. It requires seriousness. It requires attention. It requires energy and effort. And how did we manage that? We started in every single area, place we were active. This is a place, a little Italian town in northern Italy which set as a model example, but it happened all over Italy. I must say that, as we said Italy is 66 million and it has a big difference in economic resources and in geographical areas, not only between rural and cities like it is in many countries, we have actually few big cities, we have more little municipalities. A lot of little municipalities and of course rural area but our main difference is between southern Italy and northern and central Italy. For historical reasons southern Italy has always been a place where there has been less capacity of the political state, of the actual public responsibility to really be efficient

and effective. We have of course also big phenomena of criminology, mafia and so on but I mean I'm not going to talk about this. But why I am saying this is because this example comes from an area which is quite a rich area. So that makes a difference. As I said before, rich means not only rich in the private sense but rich in terms of public politics, public services. Public money circulates in society. So, this is an area, it is a small town which maybe also makes things easier. In a small town we found, I was one of the founders of, this center. We realized that we need to work together so we started by bringing together all these actors around the table. We called it the responsibility of the municipality. We have strong possibilities with the single, local politicians more than the national one. I think many countries are similar. I heard for example from Hungary which is of course a very bad country at the moment in terms of democracy and in terms of opposing Istanbul Convention principles and all the projects for women. I heard from some colleagues, WAVE members that they can actually reach quite a lot on the local level, and this is similar. Women shelters were very big and strong engines at local levels. Speaking out and saying we are the experts, we are guaranteeing in this territory that the women and children get proper help, but we need your cooperation in terms of taking your part of responsibility, your money and also all the professionals who work around it have to sit and listen to us. And we organized, we managed with the help, of course, engaging this takes years. But engaging the politicians, engaging the municipality, engaging the head of all these services, the police, the judges, the health, the social to sit around tables. But tables which are for really learning together. We did a lot of trainings together to start having a common view of the problem, common language, common research of solutions. And this was compulsory. Of course, the judges, you can't have them compulsory on the tables, so the judges are always the ones who are most missing, unfortunately. But we had the police, we had a lot of police. I must say the police since the last 10-15 years have been very active on this. Because they were also frustrated by the bad results of their trying to help sometimes. So we managed to give through this networking which we really have, as D.i.Re shelters applied in all single areas, we have created networks which are not only meeting and talking but working, working in a single situation and with the shelter as the center of it. This means a lot for the women's discourse, for the feminist discourse, for the shelters' discourse because that means that we managed to be recognized as the expert who can somehow be the ones who are leading the best policy and the best intervention. We are the ones whose language has to be taken over, whose use has to be taken over, whose methodology, how to work with a woman has to be taken over and who has to be involved when a woman comes first to the police or let's say first to hospital. They have to immediately in this network tell the woman, make her aware that there is a place, there is a shelter, there is a woman who where she can get help. All not being forced to it, this is our main issue. We don't want the woman to get caught in a net where she can't get out anymore. The

woman has to be adequately served because it's public responsibility, by whoever can do it in this territory, private civil society actors or public actors with an adequate intervention, with an adequate culture, with respect, with everything she needs. Istanbul Convention has described this multi-agency approach very well and has valued what these shelters and women's specialist services have done. What Istanbul Convention is written about was born from this, from our practice, not our Italian practice but from the feminist women's shelter practice all over Europe so you can read what I'm saying in fact in many principles of Istanbul Convention and that's crucial, that's the best recognition we could have. But because it works. When it works it works. Of course, it has to be stable, constant. It has to be taken seriously and financed by the public because imagine what enormous work this requires from the shelters to coordinate, to train, to think so it has to be financed because we are tired and we are not willing anymore to do all this work for free as if we were just some women who have nothing to do in their life apart from being nice to other women. So we are experts, competent and professionals and "despite" being civil society, "despite" being feminists we want to be important in your policy, in everything which has to be efficiently thought and financed to tackle violence in the adequate way. Otherwise, the problem will never be solved as we are seeing unfortunately over and over again. The tricky thing is that it cannot depend on single people. Because of course if you have an open-minded police officer, then it works. As soon as he goes there is a change, you have to start all over again. So, it has to be somehow formalized and we call it operational protocols. I mean it has to be written down so that everyone who is part of this network takes the commitment and is obliged to be sitting on this chair. That's very very important. Another issue which could be critical is of course the unwritten hierarchy. We know in the professional world, that's everywhere in the world, there is hierarchy between judges, social workers, doctors and at the very bottom shelters and civil society. This has to be absolutely not hidden. This has to be really taken into account and mentioned and looked at. Because in this network no one is better than the other. We all need each other, and we are all at our level necessary and important for the woman. So, the common goal has always got to be in front of us. Of course, the network is influenced by everything which comes from outside and there are attempts to sneak in as I was saying before, some visions which are not acceptable for us, such as gender neutrality. There has been a discussion about perpetrators programs. They also have to be like everyone else, professional, they have to prove that they are necessary, they have to give transparent data and not just sit on this table because they have given themselves a name and maybe to get some public money. So, it has to be tables and networks where it is possible to check on the quality, not only sit there because "I know some politician or I have managed to get a project," or something. We have to be very careful about. Because the networks are made by people, we of course had to face several different phases and this is very clear that they have also if possible, that

happens in Italy, be not only financed at the local level but they have to get national value. I mean the national methodology to tackle violence should become a model which is the same recommended and supported again financially for all local authorities. Otherwise, we have, which also is not acceptable, some local authorities which are perfect because they have a particular good moment, good will, story, history of activism and some who have nothing. And this is not fair for a woman in a country, in Italy in this case a woman has the right to get the same adequate and quality support in wherever she is, if she is in the north or south of Italy. That's the principle which we absolutely want to tackle.

Selime Büyükgöze: Thank you Marcella. Your presentation included many commonalities with our experience in Turkey and there will be many questions on it in the Q&A session. Our next speakers are Ghada Hatem and Jesica Spraos from Maison de Femmes. Dr. Ghada Hatem is a gynecologist and obstetrician. Dr. Hatem received her high school education in Lebanon and left Lebanon during the civil war. After completing her medical training at the Necker Hospital for Pediatrics in Paris, Dr. Hatem specialized in gynecology at Saint-Vincent de Paul Hospital from 1988 to 1991. She obtained an MA degree in Medical Management in 1994, followed by another MA degree from the Business School in Paris in 2011. In 2011, she became Head of the Obstetrics Department at the Delafontaine Hospital in Saint Denis and set up a reconstruction and repair service for female genital mutilation. While carrying out her medical work, she became aware of the obstacles before access to various supports, especially for women who have been subjected to violence, and started to work on this issue and established Maison Femmes - Women's House within the hospital to provide these supports to women in a comprehensive manner. The work carried out by this Women's House, which did not have any financial resources as of 2014, continues in three separate units including family planning, contraception, abortion, violence against women, and genital mutilation after the securing of both private and public financial resources in the following period.

Jessica Spraos worked as Project and Operations Manager for La Maison des Femmes de Saint-Denis (MDF) from 2018-2019. Jessica helped secure the day-to-day operations of MDF, organized both national and international professional trainings and conferences on violence against women, hosted numerous fundraising events, and built relationships with partner and non-profit organizations. She is currently a Marketing Strategist for CVS Health, an American healthcare company. She also advises the youth board of directors of The Door, a New York City-based non-profit that provides comprehensive general and sexual health services, as well as social and educational programs to youth ages 12-24. She received her BA degree in Philosophy from Washington University in St. Louis (2011) and her MA degree in Marketing from Sciences-Po Paris (2019).

Ghada Hatem: I'm Dr. Hatem. Jessica, whom we worked with at Maison des femmes for a very long time, will introduce the Maison des femmes.

Jessica Spraos: Maison des Femmes, which stands for the Women's House, of Saint-Denis is located just outside of Paris. Before I start, thank you so much on behalf of Ghada and myself for inviting us to participate. Marcella, I wanted to mention two things in response to your presentation: The first is that I think in the United States in English we say survivors all the time and in France the word victim is very prevalent. There is still a semantic challenge globally in how we speak about women survivors. And then the second thing that struck me from Marcella's presentation was that women are the center of their own journey in D.i.Re and it's the same in Maison des femmes. A woman is the instigator and also the driver for her journey within the structure.

The Maison des femmes de Saint-Denis, the women's house in Saint-Denis, is a multi-disciplinary medical social structure. Its point of orientation is the women who comes in, with an appointment or without, looking for help. She goes through an intake interview, which usually lasts about thirty minutes and during which she discusses with the professional what brings her in that day, what her primary concerns are. From there, she is oriented to one of three units that all specialize in different areas. The first unit is the family planning unit which provides OBGYN services and provides birth control, abortion services and things like that. The second unit, which is run by a midwife trained in serving women who are survivors of violence, is a unit dedicated to women who are survivors of sexual abuse, domestic violence, financial abuse etc. And then the third unit, which Ghada is actually the current director of in addition to being Executive Director of Maison des femmes and also its founder, is the unit that serves women who are survivors of Female Genital Mutilation.

Selime, in your introduction you mentioned that Ghada used to be the director of the obstetrics unit of the Delafontaine Hospital. And while she was there she noticed how prevalent the FGM (Female Genital Mutilation) was in the population that was visiting the hospital. And so, she created a unit dedicated to serving those women in particular.

Each of these three distinct medical units is supported by what we call a transversal team, a multi-disciplinary team that include a number of different professionals: social workers, sexologists, a number of psychologists, lawyers, a number of artists who run supportive workshops which I'll go into in a second, physical therapists, medical examiners, etc. And the idea is that a woman has access to all of these services, all in one place, all for free. And these services are based on and participated in based on her interests, need and desire at the time.

The Maison des femmes, in addition to these transversal actors that I

mentioned, offers a number of workshops that are intended to help boost self-esteem and provide general skills, and to recognize that not all healing takes place in the context of a one-on-one consultation. It can also come through specific activities and group therapy.

There are five workshops now: a karate workshop, a self-esteem and art therapy workshop, a dance workshop, a theater workshop, French for non-native speakers. And these are once a week all operated by trained volunteers who are specialists in that specific discipline.

All of this is contained in one single structure because the idea behind the Maison des femmes is that a woman faced too much difficulty in going from point A to point B and getting all the different services that she needed when she was enduring a difficult experience or had survived past abuse. And so, by centralizing all of these resources, we make things easier for her. We make, we believe, her journey more effective both from the medical perspective and also from the social perspective and allow professionals who are all working together to be better coordinated and work in partnership with one another.

I should mention as well that one of the really distinctive things that the Maison des femmes put together back in 2019 was, we installed what we call a police instance. We have a trained police officer, trained to work with women who are survivors of violence, come into the Maison des femmes once a week where women can file complaints. So, women can avoid going into local precincts where they may or may not receive the most welcoming reception from professionals.

Marcella mentioned a similar issue where, depending on who you land on the day you get there, you may find someone who is extremely well-equipped who deals with survivors of violence, or you may find somebody who is perhaps not as well informed. And the beauty of coming to the Maison des femmes to file a complaint is that you are guaranteed to work with a police officer who is trained to work specifically with women who are survivors of violence. And in addition, that work is going to be coordinated into that woman's larger journey at the Maison des femmes. So it's something that, while respecting her privacy obviously, her treating physician can be aware of, that her social worker can be aware of, etc.

Outside of the Maison des femmes, there are a couple of really important initiatives that we've been part of: The first is the duplication of the Maison des femmes model, the idea of an inter-disciplinary team all located in one place within France was a relatively new concept and certainly one that oriented around healthcare as the primary driver for that journey. That model has been replicated in a number of European and French cities, and actually international cities which we're really quite proud of. The first

was in Brussels. There are a number of other sister Maison des femmes in other parts of France and I believe in 2020, might have been 2021, Ghada and her team started up something, a national collective whose objective is to raise money and aid in the operation of all of our sister Maison des femmes around the country. That, at a very high level, are the services that we provide in addition to developing national and international partnerships as you mentioned Selime in your introduction, presenting conferences and colloquia with different professionals all around violence against women and a number of other amazing activities that we do on a daily basis.

Ghada Hatem: Thank you, Jessica. I think it's a very strong presentation. Actually, we are working on two things: taking care of children which are considered as being co-victims as well as the mothers, and welcoming all victims of sexual assault, day and night, offering them health services and police...

Jessica Spraos: The ability to file complaints.

Ghada Hatem: And then psychological training and everything that Jessica explained will be offered to victims of sexual assault because it's very difficult in France when you have been raped, you have to go to different places, to the police, then to another hospital, then try to find a lawyer and it's not so easy.

Selime Büyükgöze: Thank you very much. Our next speaker is Catriona.

Catriona works both as an Independent Social Work and Domestic Abuse Consultant and as a Senior Social Worker with women in the field of domestic abuse, addiction, and trauma recovery in civil society. She is also a Practice Teacher/Trainer for social work students. Catriona has worked as a social worker in a number of settings and has worked with domestic violence perpetrators and their families in the Caledonian System and seconded to Lothian and Borders Regional Police for three years as a multi-agency domestic violence coordinator. In addition to being a Registered Social Worker, she has an LLB in Law and a diploma in Professional Legal Practice. She founded the charity Parental Advocacy and Rights (PAR) and is a trustee of the organization. Catriona is currently studying an MScR at the University of Edinburgh, conducting research on the ethics of social workers working with mothers affected by domestic violence. She is frequently commissioned by the courts as a social worker to review social work case files for ongoing cases and to prepare risk assessments for cases affected by domestic abuse and historical child abuse cases. Catriona is also an independent report writer for the non-governmental organization Children's Hearings Scotland.

Catriona Grant: Hello, I'm glad I'm here today, I'm Catriona Grant. I'm here to speak about some of the institutional responses to domestic abuse in

Scotland and across the UK. I want to talk about three things and end on one thing. I'm a social worker, I've been a social worker for 25 years and I've been a political activist in the feminist movement for about 30 years. I'm currently doing a master's at university, and I'm pondering about why women are seen to fail to protect their children when there's domestic abuse. I'm also a kinship carer, which means I look after my nieces as a single parent, and I think that brought me back to activism as well, when we see where social work is; and I'll get to that as well, because it is a crossover. I've worked in the violence against women field for twenty-five years and mostly worked with women, adult survivors. And again, we are having a big debate about the language—I've always just called them women, but obviously there's survivors, there's victims, there's adult victims, survivors—and depending really where I am I find myself using different terms. So, I might interchange from women, I might interchange between victims and survivors.

One of the issues that I have come across as a social worker most recently, in the past 10 years of my practice. I come from perpetrator programs. So, I worked with the women and the children in perpetrator programs where men were convicted of perpetrating against their partners and ex-partners. I was seconded to the police, and I worked there for three years, helping them with their processes and then I left to go into the voluntary sector and to study to be a lawyer and then I found myself working predominantly with women who were in recovery from domestic abuse, addictions and mental health, who had been separated from their children because of domestic abuse. I think, you know, this is a big, big question we need to grapple with.

I also have founded a charity called Parental Advocacy Rights [PAR], and I'll talk about that in a little bit. But I'm just going to come back to the failure to protect and mothers being separated from the children because of domestic abuse. I don't know if it's a matter that happens throughout Europe. Unfortunately, because I only speak English, I only read about what happens in English-speaking countries. So, I don't know what happens in France and Germany and Italy and Turkey, if women actually face losing their children because of domestic abuse, I hold my hand up to that.

I'm Scottish and I live in Scotland, and I'll try to look at the state of play across the UK about all this. In the UK, as is in most countries, domestic abuse has been criminalized and in Scotland we have existing legislation that allows for coercive control to be criminalized. So not just the physical violence, not just shouting and threatening people, but actually the whole gamut of domestic abuse. We've actually pulled all the different forms of domestic abuse under one piece of legislation and one act. So, you will be charged with a Domestic Abuse Act with a description rather than just the Telecommunications Act or a breach of the peace or whatever it used to be

beforehand. That has been introduced in England and Wales through their new Domestic Abuse Act. That's just been passed through the Westminster Parliament. And also, what's really important that's happened in Scotland and now in England and Wales is that children will now be seen as victims in their own right. So just for being in the same household as a victim of domestic abuse, a child will also be seen as a victim and then there will be a criminalization around that when that happens.

Now I just want to put the figures into context. In England and Wales, we've got over seven-hundred thousand police calls for domestic abuse, and in Scotland it's about sixty [or] seventy thousand. In England and Wales in 2020 — now this is before COVID, so March 2020, so we're not taken into the figures that take us into COVID — is that there were 61,169 prosecutions, but that was a massive fall from 78,624 the year before. So actually, we've got all this new legislation, the police are up for it, yet prosecutions are going down for domestic abuse, and I know it's really plummeted because of COVID, because of how the courts have been working. But also we do have about twenty-five percent of court processes get dropped, they're not a successful prosecution. And mostly that is not just because of lack of evidence, but it's actually because the victim survivor themselves either doesn't want to go to court, doesn't turn up in court or doesn't agree with what the police have said and doesn't want to interact with that. So, I think we need to look at why and how that happens.

In England particularly, domestic abuse is not seen as a gender-based crime; it is in Scotland, it's called a gender-based crime in Scotland. But when I look at the figures from England, 92 percent of the defendants that went to court were male. And so that tells you that it is still men that are going to court, even if England and Wales don't see it as a gendered crime, and also 77 percent of the victims were female, 16 percent were male and seven percent weren't recorded for whatever reason. So it is still a gender-based crime, no matter how it's framed.

There's some movement in the UK to change the narrative from why does she not leave to why does he not stop doing what he's doing, and moving the responsibility onto the perpetrator, moving away from the victim blaming perspective. And in the UK, [or more specifically] the Westminster government has given 20 million pounds to work with perpetrators and their families in England. In Scotland we've got what's called the Caledonian system, and that's the system that I worked in, which is for perpetrators, their female partners, and their children, and that's been rolled out throughout Scotland. I wrote the children's manuals and the women's manuals for that service. So, like Marcella brings up the point, we don't just want perpetrator programs just because they say we should be here, they should be accredited, they should be professional, they should be holding perpetrators accountable,

and they should give the figures and statistics that show the work that they do is good work, and it should never take away from women's provision, from children's provision.

But over COVID, what we did see in the UK is that women were reporting domestic abuse, but the court system slowed down, the child protection system slowed down, everything slowed down, except from the women's sector which I work with. We were very, very busy. We also saw [at] the beginning of COVID that there were more women being killed. There was a spike at beginning of COVID, of women being killed. In 2019 Karla Ingala Smith in the UK counted that there were 117 women [who] had been killed by men and obviously there was other women who had been killed, we just didn't know who the who the person was. And so actually, we need to still be looking at the violence and the risk that comes with domestic abuse. And there's a lot of focus, as it should do, with social work and the police working together. But what this, I think, has brought about is that in the past 20 years in the UK [there has been] an increase of children coming into care and an increase of children being taken away from their mothers, and without really a good enough discourse around that, an acceptance that that's how it's got to be.

So now what we have in the UK is a crisis in the care system where we don't have enough foster carers, where we're privatizing residential care and mothers are finding it harder and harder to see their children once they're separated. And also in the UK, when we have adoption, most adoptions are closed. So that means the child's identity is changed, goes over to the new family and the mother and the father, and that other family is no longer part of their family. And all that they get is photographs and art, maybe a birthday or a Christmas card exchanged once a year.

So we really, really need to challenge that, and myself as a social worker with some other social workers and some other women who have experienced having their children taken away from them have set up a new charity called Parental Advocacy and Rights, and it works with mothers who are having their children taken off them. Now, the majority of the women have very many stories of how this happened to them. [With] some of them it's about direct abuse. Sometimes the women have been involved in harming or hurting their children. We're not going to pretend that didn't happen, and there has been drug use and there has been poor mental health and there has been trauma. But actually [for] almost all the women we speak to it, give or take a few, domestic abuse has been there for a long time, and it's not been addressed, and they're seen to have failed to protect their children. Yet they have asked for help, they've asked for support, but the support and the work that they do is seen as not being good enough.

So we really need to start asking questions about social work, about child

protection, about violence against women and domestic abuse. Is this how we want it to be, that women are therefore frightened? So what we have in the UK and Scotland is women are frightened to phone the police because social work will get involved and they then feel that they are at risk of having their children removed from them, rather than it being a supportive service. And particularly if you've already had a child removed from you and then domestic abuse continues, so you go into a new relationship and there's domestic abuse and you've got another child or more children, you will know what the consequences were from when you phoned the police. So I just want to put it out there, from a social worker and from a feminist point of view, what do we do about that? So our organization, Parental Advocacy Rights that we've set up actually challenges that, and I really see it as part of activism.

The other really good thing that's happening, though, in the UK, that's actually come from America, which is the Safe and Together approach, and I don't know if people know that, which again is within the child protection setting for domestic abuse. And what that does is it holds a safe place for the adult survivors as they call it. It's not a gendered program, though they recognize gender bias, how mothers and fathers are seen in society. But what it does is it promotes the safety and stability and the nurturance of the non-abusive parent and the child, which will predominantly be the mother and the children, and it holds perpetrators accountable for their behavior and not just in the criminal justice system. Not just that they have to go to court, that they have to be convicted, but asking them questions about who takes the children to school, who looks after the children, what are you doing to support your partner, et cetera, et cetera? And I think that the Safe and Together model, which actually offers a suite of tools, has been really helpful by moving away from blaming victims and survivors and actually holding perpetrators accountable. And that might be the dads, but it might also be what we call the social father — the stepdad, mum's boyfriend or any man that's got a role in the child's life. And that he has been thought about. As I say, it's not gender specific, but it's very, very clear about gender double bias.

And I just want to go back to [the idea that] when we don't hold the perpetrator responsible for their behavior, then what happens is all the focus goes on the survivor, the victim, usually the mother. And therefore then we create a paradigm where she is seen as almost a perpetrator towards her child, her children, as opposed to the person who's actually having criminal behavior and acted against her. And you know, over the past 20 years, particularly, there's been a heat spot on mothers, I think, also including in the family courts, where women when they're going through a divorce are wanting to say that they don't want a partner to see the children or to argue about contact. I've been told by lawyers not to mention domestic abuse and often

are being accused of parental alienation. And so some of those women are also coming to PAR to ask if we can help them.

We campaign for direct advocacy for mothers, but also policy change so that women can and mothers and parents, and dads as well — we don't really work directly with fathers, we don't exclude talking about men, but we are predominantly a women's organization — we're asking that, that there parental advocates assigned to families when there is a child protection matter, particularly when there's domestic abuse. And for me, I do that advocacy with a Safe and Together approach and also my background is working with women experiencing trauma.

And so actually, we need to challenge the system that is meant to be protecting. So having been involved for years and years and years in a system and designing a system to challenge domestic abuse, I'm now finding myself on the other side, saying, 'Wait a minute, what are we doing to these mothers and these children?' We need to really think about this. And you know, if all the focus is on her, and not all women always use the services that are there, then we have a bit of a problem. I actually think I've seen, over the past 30 years in the UK, a split between the women's movement and the women's sector. So I count myself in this. So I'm a professional, I'm a social worker, I'm legally trained, I'm trained in social work and I've become a professional. Yes, at one point I really was an activist, and I find myself going back to being an activist, particularly through the Parental Advocacy Rights.

So what we have is, in the UK the reckon 36 billion pounds is lost in the economy because of violence against women or domestic [violence]. And yet we have more and more funding than we've ever had before to women's refuges, to women's projects, like the project I used to work in when I worked for women in recovery from addiction and trauma and domestic abuse, perpetrator programs, refuges and all the rest of it. But I'm seeing that actually violence against women does not seem to be decreasing, so we have to be asking a question about that.

So reforms are necessary. We've campaigned for them, we've fought for them and we need them. We need the reforms. The changes and legislation that have just come through in England has been really, really welcomed by the women's sector and indeed the women's movement. Women need the services, but they do come at a cost if we don't challenge the deep-rooted, institutionalized ways of working. So what happens when we raise our voices and say children are affected by domestic abuse and the consequences are that they are taken away from their mothers? That can't be right. And what do we do when activists like myself, so I'm not pointing a finger at anybody else, become professionalized in a way where we are no longer demanding more than what we should be demanding. And what happens when the

academics are worried about their funding, and so they choose what to research and what not to research? Does that cause a tension? I don't know. So I'm seeing in the UK just now some really good practice in social work and around. But I do think there is a tension between what we've called for and what we wanted and then what's happening to women, particularly to mothers and children. And that might just be happening in the UK and Australia and in the USA and it might not be happening in Europe. And I really hope it isn't happening in Europe. But I just want to put it out there that actually, despite working very hard in this sector we are actually finding out that it has come at a cost to some mothers, particularly mothers in the domestic abuse field.

But I'm willing to answer lots of questions on perpetrator programs, on parental advocacy, on child protection, safe and together. But I'm up for the fight, I'm up for changing things and I'm up for the challenge of saying, 'No, let's do this well, but actually, you can't have it at the cost of women all the time.

Selime Büyükgöze: Thank you very much. I will gather the questions, and then direct them. There is one questions addressed directly to Marcella. What is the most effective strategy for specialists working with public and other actors in developing a collective understanding? Another question asks about the practices pertaining to the monitoring of the women and children in the post-shelter period?

Marcella Pirrone: Yes, about the networking. I think that, of course, as I said managing to have all these different actors with these different approaches, with different also institutional mandates and with these prejudices. We cannot forget how many prejudices there are between different professionals. I mentioned the hierarchy and so on. It's certainly not easy, that's why I said it, that it needs time, it needed time to build up, first of all, respect for what we do. I always say it, women activists and women services experience the same thing women experience. They are not taken seriously, they are not professional, they are not believed; so, we as well as women activists and services and professionals have to fight to be taken seriously, to be listened to and to have value. It's nothing new unfortunately. So, this is the first thing. And I add something new which I am considering since a few years. The new characteristic I add which this women's specialist services as a core of the network have to have, is not to be obedient. And I have a particular theory about that. Because I think this is something I would like to say also to Catriona when she was saying "I am an activist who is now a professional." And what does it mean? I become professional, I go, let's say, "into the system." Or what does it mean? I have always been an activist and a professional. I have never had different phases in my life, and it has reciprocally nourished my activism and my professionalism. And that was

very important because that made me stronger on both sides. It made me stronger as an activist because I could say, "Sorry, I know what I'm talking about." But not only because activists have to be professionals to know what they are talking about but in this work sometimes you have to say that. And being a lawyer of course helps. That's the hierarchy. This is the society. Like being a doctor helps. That's like it is. On the other side, as a professional, when I say... And I was a professional in the courts and you know how strict courts are about hierarchy, how the judges are absolutely untouchable, and how everyone has to be hoping that the judge has a good mood, that the judge is on that day listening, that the judge might understand, that the judge might not be misogynist, etc. So, you have to go all through these fears which the woman goes through too to have an efficient answer from this professional. So, I what learned is that I don't have to fear anything, that I don't have to be obedient in the sense of trying to fit in. Trying to fit in the mood of someone, trying to fit in their values, trying to fit in... No. This is a lost battle. If you go there, you actually do what the whole society, this patriarchal society wants women to do and that is: stay at your place. Stay there. You are only allowed to come up when I tell you. But don't dare standing up because then I have to hit you back. Because this is not obedient. So, I learned that I am much more respected if I'm not obedient. It's seducing to be obedient because of course you have to reach a result. So, it is seducing to think "Okay, what does this judge want to hear? How this social worker wants this woman to be?" And we know many services want the women to be weak, to be begging, not to be strong and stating her rights. Because if she does that, she's arrogant, she's not to be believed anymore. There is something strange because she is not a victim like I want her to be. This is not a joke, sometimes we even have to tell the women... And that I'm not willing anymore because once you tell a woman, "Please, be quiet, don't be too strong. Don't express your anger too much. You are absolutely appalled by what has happened to you. But be well educated." No. Because that brings us back in this pattern and we will never break them. We have to be absolutely strong ourselves as professional and that allow the women to be strong because they are. They are allowed to be telling someone that they are not doing well the job, that they are expecting something else. This is for me very important. This was also important in the networking to be absolutely standing and sitting there at the same level as all the others because sometimes we are putting ourselves down because in order to be accepted.

Selime Büyükgöze: Thank you Marcella. Another question: Throughout all these years of political activism against violence against women and children, have you noticed common turning points for women? The moments she/they finally realized strengths in herself/themselves.

Jessica Spraos: I would say, in my observation, given the Maison des femmes

is a healthcare structure, and that so much of the care we provide are sexual health services and OBGYN services, the two critical turning points that we observe really frequently were during pregnancy. That was a moment where it felt like it was time, where women could take steps for themselves to end the cycle of violence that they are enduring. The other sort of critical and very frequently seen moment is around milestones in their children's lives. For women who have children, if the violence is beginning to visibly affect how their children are behaving that is also an instigator of a desire to change. Even if the desire was always there to change, it's an instigator of action.

Catriona Grant: I would completely agree with you, Jessica. Pregnancy and children. But I also think about what resources women have, what support women have. I've worked with women long time and sometimes the bottom line keep moving and moving and moving. At the bottom line happens to be if he does this I will do that. But when they had resources and they had the services and support around them, it wasn't necessarily leaving the relationship, it was like the ending of the relationship. She was starting to do things differently like go to college, look for work. But obviously all women are very different. But I do think the biggest push for women I think is the children. But they need resources to be able to end the relationship safely as well.

Marcella Pirrone: I'll bring data from femicide in Italy at least but not only in Italy. Most women who are killed had been looking for help several times. Several, several times. Most. So, the non-adequate responses have the responsibility of these women being killed and this is a model for the women who are in the situation where they feel they could be killed. They hear that these women have been killed despite having asked several times and again for help where they should have asked it, in all the places which I have mentioned. So, of course, this is very discouraging. This is frightening. Because women are frightened, and they have the right to be frightened. And so, I come back to the adequate responses. How many women tell us, "I went, I tried and they didn't react," or "I said that but they said, look this is the father of your children, etc." So again, I'm sorry, I might be repetitive but it's really the response. Women even if they are not experts of violence against women, they realize and they feel what is around them and they really understand and feel when they can ask for help, when it's better not to.

Jessica Spraas: I think that really emphasizes the importance of interdisciplinary nature of these different models that we're talking about. If you can provide all these services in one location with staff that are trained ideally to support women, then you lower the chance that women are going to come by an inadequate response and therefore keep trying and running up against the wall every time that they're looking for help.

Marcella Pirrone: And if we can add to what you just said that the adequate response is not only structures and services, but also culture. Because we might have a lot of places, think about the police, there is police everywhere, police are present in all little places and bigger places but if their cultural response is wrong, that's it. Even if the structure is there, it does not work. That is what the Istanbul Convention, again I am sorry, we are in Turkey, I really wish at once to remind this very important instrument, has been very clear about it. Prevention, prevention, training of all sorts of professionals.

Catriona Grant: I think that in all and the UK about the police, you know we really do rely on the police. We rely on the police to be safe and to be professional. And we've just had a police officer convicted of the kidnapping and raping of and murdering of a woman. He used his police badge, he used his handcuffs, and all that. He had been known by his colleague as "the rapist." Because women feel uncomfortable in his company. And they call that was his nickname at work. That wasn't a domestic abuse case, but it was a horrendous case that happened during Covid. He stopped her in the street and why aren't you home about during Covid? And the defense that he gave to the police when he was being interviewed was "Yes, I did kidnapped her but it was because I underpaid an Eastern European prostitute and then her pimps went after me and I had to get them another women to deliver them." He thought that was an okay defense to give to the police officers. So, if that culture isn't challenged as well and then it really has a big impact on the whole of women in society as well. And particularly when we want a change in police responses. So that is a very public thing that has happened. Quite frankly everybody shocked by it. I recommend a book called "In Control: Dangerous Relationships and How They End in Murder." It's got a very good ten step process of multi-agency working of women when they say that they feel they are at risk of likely being killed by their partner.

Jessica Spraos: Just one last detail because your book recommendation reminded me of a tool that we have available to us in France and at the Maison des femmes, which I think has been surprisingly effective. When we're talking about moments that instigates that, allowing women to have this transitional moment in her head and her behavior and in seeking help, there is a tool called Le Violentomètre. And it's a ruler that goes from left to right and indicates a list of behaviors that are increasingly aggressive, dangerous, violent. Ghada uses this in her clinic. A number of our other physicians and professionals do use it as well and it's a really useful tool for helping a woman visualize what she's experiencing a) where it falls on the spectrum of normal and then b) that this spectrum progresses. What's happening right now might seem okay, but what's happening right now could also lead to much more severe behavior down the line. It's not a moment in that woman's life necessarily but I guess just an important thing to... yes, exactly. An important tool that anyone can use almost in their daily lives

that help people understand that what they're experiencing isn't necessary, isn't acceptable, isn't their fault, things like that.

Marcella Pirrone: That's very interesting for the risk assessment. I mean, professionally called risk assessment but I understand it is not only for professionals but mainly for the women who can together with the professionals value and evaluate her risk which is very important.

Catriona Grant: Can I ask other people, is there a problem in other countries about mothers having their children removed from them because of domestic abuse? Or is UK specific thing?

Marcella Pirrone: This is the main issue WAVE for 10 years I would say, this is not new. It had started and we could see it coming and coming. Now it is absolutely an enormous problem. I can tell about Europe but I had a very interesting participation in a Canadian conference and it's also absolutely a problem in the whole of, I would say the western world, Australia as well. So, this is of course, due to this aim to be equal, to be sort of giving fathers their rights. We could really see it developing and coming. And a lot of responsibility I see in this also in the communication. People, media. Because I remember, I don't know in your country, but I remember there was 20 years ago this fathers' movement was finally something new. And in fact, it was expressing what every woman would have loved, that father's are fathers, that they take their responsibility. So, it was a great hope, everyone was really supporting this. But it was of course the voice of totally partial view of those men who were actually fighting. Because the fathers who are fathers don't have time. I always say. Fathers who are really doing father's duties, they don't have time to do what's the fathers' movement were constantly doing, always being around, not really doing... So, this was a responsibility because everyone in our democracies can stand up and do a movement and speak up, why not? But why do I get so much attention? Why do I get such a critical attention by the mainstream media? And this is for me very clear, suddenly the attention of the mainstream media who always looked for something new without interrogating what is behind it but it's also a very good way of the patriarchal system to sort of convey in a good mission, because it's a good mission to be fathers, of course, but to convey the subtle fighting against women's rights. It was very clear for whoever was active, but it was not clear for many, women as well. And now we are where we are. I mean this is a very dangerous situation. We have in many countries women who are not speaking up anymore about violence. Because they are told by other women "Be careful, if you talk about this the children will be... You will be questioned as a mother." And this is unacceptable, but it is actually happening in many countries.

Selime Büyükgöze: I am moving onto other question. The next question is specifically directed to Catriona. In Turkey, children are invisible in the

system unless they are subjected to severe physical violence or sexual abuse. In a context where social services for children are very limited and services are provided for their mothers, what are the concrete steps that are necessary to be taken to demonstrate that children are affected by domestic violence and to make their needs visible? There is one more question: How do children report the domestic violence they are exposed to? Which mechanisms do they use and who represents them? Are the perpetrators of violence convicted after a complaint is filed? Are there any statistics on this issue?

Catriona Grant: So firstly, when I'm talking about domestic abuse, I mean within the UK, that's from a partner to a partner or an ex-partner, it's not from them to children, it's not child abuse or other family members that come into gender-based violence. In UK, I think we do have got quite good services for children particularly through the Women's Aid movement. They have excellent services for children. There are good charities that give support to children. The biggest way the children are supported is through the child protection process. The state says we will protect you because you are a victim of domestic abuse, or your mother is, or your carer, or your father is. And so therefore we will protect you. That's the main way of how children in the UK are supported by the majority of the voluntary sector that do direct support towards children. As I said, in the Scottish and the UK legislation you have just been in the house or the household, you might not be in the house, you might be staying with your grandma, and there is a domestic abuse incident and there are children, the perpetrator will be charged with an offense against children as well. We'll see how that's planning out, it's just come into Scotland and England. And how do children complain about domestic abuse? I think children tell their supporters and their school, people that know and all that what happens in the house. And I don't know that's what you meant about how they talk about whether the parents have a fight and they are scared. Or if you're talking about what the abuse that happens to them and that's different movement altogether about calling it child abuse and children's own right.???? And the thing I see in Scotland is that I often see is that children's personhood is negated, they are not actually seen as persons in their own right. They are seen as children of the parents or you know, they are appendages to adults and I think that often gets in the way of children get the support that they need or their voices been heard. Their personhood is often denied. We have a very good legal system in Scotland that everybody in Scotland in legal profession it's very unique and it's very good. And children have their voice. I see all the time that children aren't allowed to come to the meetings and that they are excused from the meetings and the personhood. The legal right is being denied of them because somebody else been altruistic towards them "Ah, it's a shame for them, they shouldn't come." I think, how children's voices in our systems, in legal systems, in child protection systems are heard, you

know we are quite far away from that, I cannot speak about it here but we have a very good voluntary sector in the UK and Scotland that watch children.

Jessica Spraos: On the part of how children are disclosing, at least from our perspective, there are also two additional vehicles. There is first the Maison des femmes, the women's houseworks with adolescents on a regular basis, delivering sexual and relational health classes. This is an educational obligation in France for children to receive sexual education classes and the Maison des femmes team goes out and delivers them or hosts them internally. And these are really wonderful opportunities to talk to kids, between ages 11-18, about what healthy relationships, bodies, gender identity looks like. And it's a really good opportunity to introduce people to the structure. So that can be a way where we began to... Introduce people to the structure and then invite them to come back for a consultation. It's open to minors as well. So those sexual health classes can be a really good opportunity for disclosure from children to professional. And then the second way would be in actual consultation, with an OBGYN for the first time when you're getting birth control, with a psychologist you might be seeing, with a social worker. These are all chances where we hear from the kids in communities that we serve.

Selime Büyükgöze: Next question is about alimony. Another question is about alimony. Marcella, I received a comment and a question on what you have said about men's groups. Men's groups emerged in Turkey a few years ago. They are copycatting groups from Europe and other parts of the world and are organizing against alimony in Turkey. They are demanding a legal change that would take away women's right to alimony. They circulate a lot of misinformation about this issue and do a very serious lobbying work. Later on, this group even tried to meddle with the violence law in Turkey and even supported the abolition of the Istanbul Convention. It can be seen as a self-organized group, but it is also supported by various political groups. The question points to this similarity and asks about how we establish solidarity with women when it comes to alimony and economic violence after divorce.

Marcella Pirrone: I think it is very important to stress the economic situation of women in our society generally speaking and how much we know, for example. I don't know in your countries but for example this Covid crisis has in my country, which is a Southern European country, shown that we were all expecting an incredible crisis, especially for Italy, which has never been particularly economically stable and strong. And incredibly, we are already facing an improvement and the economic situation is getting better. We are not in crisis anymore; we are even economically growing more than before Covid. But a very important point is that women are totally out of the market. Women not at all participating in this new, increased sort of rebirth of economic issues. And it reminds me, I wasn't there but I read history,

it reminds me of the war period when women were sent back home, they had managed to bring countries to war because the men were of course engaged in something else. And then once, it is in May Revolutions as well, where Ghada comes from, I think it is the similar issue where women fight, women do create the conditions to be growing and then they are sent back home to their place in the traditional role. And this is a danger which we always had, and which is confirmed now with this so-said economic crisis. I think all over the world, I can talk about my country, but it has always been a problem, the economic violence. It's been structural as I just mentioned and of course in a traditional setting or even not in a traditional setting, even if I'm a woman who works but I am under threat in my home, I can be under economic violence. This is a very clear instrument to really control, you know, violence against women is to be put at the same level and only works with control. And that's a very big instrument. So how to help? I'm not a friend of social measures which give you a little bit of money. It might be an emergency help but that's not the help. Because it keeps me in this dependent position. I'm not dependent on my husband anymore but I'm dependent on social systems which still treat me as someone who is away from society whereas I am not. I am capable, I want to give my energy, I want to contribute to the growth of society and my life. And again, this has been said very clearly, I must say in the last two years by the president of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen, by all the agendas and things, it is, violence against women goes together, the fight, tackling it goes together with tackling and promoting gender equality. So tackling gender inequality and promoting gender equality. This is absolutely has always been said last 40 years but now it's clear more than ever.

Jessica Spraos: There are a few vehicles in France that are quite useful. The first is, let's say a woman finds herself in a situation where her partner is controlling her finances, taking her paychecks, things like that. There is legal access which allows women to open for own bank account in private without a partner knowing about it. And in addition to situations like that, in general we try to direct women towards social services and legal services in the case where a woman is not receiving alimony from a partner or should be where she does not have sufficient resources to support herself and her family. There are different public funding structures available to her. It's difficult to access obviously especially if you're not a native speaker in the country where you're living but facilitating that is a step in the right direction.

Catriona Grant: In the UK just now, at the beginning of Covid the government gave anybody who is on universal credit state benefits next to 20 pound a week. And this week they just removed that 20 pounds. At the same time we've got a gas price rising through the roof. It's gone up by 40% over three days just here in the UK. And food prices have gone really really high. We even got petrol and food shortages in the UK. We are in a much difficult

situation than before and we just have the benefit cut from women who experience not just gender-based violence but dominantly women who are looking after children, single parents, that's going to be a big cut to their money. I agree, it's not just about government handouts, we need to have women who are able to work, childcare, the resources that women need. I know I need to be able to participate, so if I know I need then it must be for all women. It is about the ability to fully participate. But I think economically and I do quite a lot of work with women who have been financially abused by their partners, who take them to court and they employ fantastic legal teams and the women relying on legal aid. Men hiding money, stealing money and women aren't in the position to protect the resources in the same way as some men are. So financial abuse is actually as well as having gender equality, as well as losing your home becoming poorer is also a massive thing. Domestic abuse.... Some of it is really quite difficult to unpack. Particularly when there is quite a lot of resources, some women get a very little. In Scotland you get legal aid on your own home, so you have to go to court against your husband or your ex-partner, on your own home. They give you legal aid but then take a standard security, a mortgage on your home so when you sell your home, they claw it back. So, women lose their homes because of legal aid, not just because of a new court against her husband to protect the children because legal aid then sells her house for them. That is just not getting spoken about in the way it should be.

Selime Büyükgöze: Next question is about coordination: How do you politically combat coordination problems in the field of violence against women? How is your institutional relationship with public and state institutions in this sense? What kind of solutions do you come up with? I would like to add to this question. One of the foundations of the Istanbul Convention is coordination. In our fight for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention in Turkey, we have often emphasized this. When we look at the implementation of the laws in recent years, we are trying to make visible what the lack of coordination in practice has cost women in their lives. To give a concrete example, for example, when women want to get a confidentiality decision, they have to put up a very serious struggle for this decision to take effect in institutions. Since the institution in charge of ensuring this coordination does not do this, women go to the institutions one by one and try to enforce the confidentiality order, and accessing rights turns into a struggle. Therefore, we would very much like to hear about your experiences pertaining to coordination.

Marcella Pirrone: I want to add to this because my presentation did not provide an exhaustive answer. But from the point of view of coordination, I would not find any other way than really making a constant effort by bringing together the people responsible for every agency to do what they have to do. That's probably not enough but I want to give an example so that maybe we can have an instrument. We have to think creatively about everything because

I know that agencies are, of course, overwhelmed and they don't want to, and they don't really manage to care about or tackle these contradictory practices. And then the woman is the victim of this bureaucracy, this failing system. Initially, in Italy we had a very good sentence by the European Court of Human Rights who condemned the state because a woman was killed because she was not allowed to be taken over in a refuge because there was a bureaucratic rule of paying a certain amount of money which is a sort of a daily rate. She couldn't pay the daily services who usually do pay for her, but they did not do it. They were somehow missing out on this. They were working bad, and she was killed. And the state was condemned not only to money but of course the state goes back to these services. And we had a similar sentence with a prosecutor who did not take seriously certain things was again, the state was condemned to pay money by the European Court. Because this prosecutor did not do his duty the woman was killed and the state goes back to this prosecutor. And this I can assure you are cases which has much more effect than us telling them for months and years that they have to do their duty because all prosecutors immediately in all over Italy knew "Be careful because that one colleague has been condemned and the state has asked for accountability." That service knows now that if they are late, if they don't work well together, if they don't work well for the protection of the woman, there are now, also CEDAW, some international instruments which can come back and say "Sorry, unfortunately most of the cases have gone wrong. But then I come back and ask for liability." So, we have to be more professional in really bringing those services, people, and functions to liability and accountability.

Jessica Spraos: This is kind of idealistic American interpretation of the question, and I can't seem to shake being American no matter how much I try. But I think that the coordination question is relevant on two levels. Selime, the way you put it on the macro level, coordination between agencies, between government structures. But going back to the point that Marcella made in the very beginning, if we start with the woman as the center of whatever kind of care or support she needs and let her drive that journey and ensure the people who are working around her working collaboratively together, then you're modelling at a micro level the kind of interdisciplinary and coordinated nature that you're hoping to see at a macro level. And I guess there's sort of a fundamental belief that if we're able to do that at a smaller level it will more easily replicate higher up the chain. In addition to participating in national networks, international networks, European networks at a non-profit level is also critical.

Catriona Grant: I think actually the European Court of Human Rights legislation, I mean we use quite a lot in Scotland. *Opuz vs. Turkey* is the reason why you got to do the work you got to do. What we have in Scotland, some parts of England and Wales is called *Marac*, multi-agency risk

assessment conferences that does bring the agencies together where they discuss high risk cases. Risk assessment happens collaboratively but what I don't think happens collaboratively is necessarily women and children's care. They discuss the risks but actually what's going on, what support and care do the women and the children need, that is not discussed collaboratively. And neither discussed collaboratively is if you're going to hold the perpetrator accountable and responsible. How do you do that? So, our pockets of collaboration, and good collaboration I would say, but also it does fall our way when it comes to I think the support and care... Finding the person who's going to do what you suggest Jessica as opposed to just comes to her.

Selime Büyükgöze: Thank you very much. This is the last question. We have been using electronic handcuffs in Turkey since the beginning of this year. Cases involving a high risk to life safety and violence that cannot be eliminated by ordinary monitoring are evaluated by the commissions established in ŞÖNİMs, and if deemed appropriate and approved by the court, they are included in this scope. I wonder if there are similar practices in other countries. If so, how are they implemented? To explain, electronic handcuffs are a monitoring method used in different contexts in Turkey. Monitoring the perpetrator of violence is one of them. It is one of the practices that we, as Mor Çatı, are critical of. I give you the floor to you.

Catriona Grant: We have in the UK where perpetrators are given a bracelet. But it's controversial because they can only have that to live with the victims. They cannot be made to live in the home where the victim or the victims, you have to live somewhere else. For very obvious reasons. I was once involved... twelve years ago about given GPS bracelets to high-risk women so they could press the button so we knew where they are any one time. But I think that there was too much data breaches that were going on with that and that made it quite difficult. But if it's about perpetrators been made to have bracelets so that they are in the home, so we just know when they leave the house or not, I think that's really controversial, and I just don't really see how it helps women. But I don't know if that is what you're talking about. But that would be seen as very bad practice in the UK, but it would still happen because things always happen. But it would not be common.

Jessica Spraos: The electronic bracelet system in France which was adopted not too long ago, I think after the Spanish model and it's not, you know... also controversial, also not a perfect tool but not something that we can outright claim is not useful in certain circumstances. Of course, again, not the only resource available.

Marcella Pirrone: I can add that Italy has also probably like France only started a short while ago. But they are actually not applied for technical reasons and for whatever reasons. I must say that as much as I know, none

of the feminist women of the women's shelter has asked for this measure. Because this is a typical answer which seems, great answer to this security, safety but as we've seen, and I was answering on the chat to one of these questions. One woman asked if the punishment is efficient or high enough... We can see all criminal systems that what is written in law is absolutely high, sounds well, and so the electronic bracelet also. But in fact, as I said many times, the whole application is not really working. So, it is more I would say political, demagogical measure to be announced when someone wants to show that they are doing something but when you are going to investigate how is this really applied, how many times and to whom, it's not satisfying. Plus, I can say what Catriona said, it's technically very often, very difficult to apply and dangerous because it gives women a false safety whereas they are not safe in any case. Because what do you have? You have constantly someone running and immediately coming and stop the man when he's in your area? It's unthinkable, at least in Italy with 66 million people. This is not a little village where you can do something like that. We have never pointed on this instrument, and we will not do it. We much more prefer to change the whole culture and as I said the whole attitude and competence of all professionals than giving our safety to some mechanical instrument which does not work.

Selime Büyükgöze: Thank you very much. I give the floor to you for your last comments and remarks.

Catriona Grant: Marcella, I must say I want to thank you for reminding me not to be obedient. I've never been obedient. But actually, I've got a problem and the way I was dealing with it, I was trying to be obedient. And I'm going to go back and stop being obedient so thank you. And I think tell all the women just don't be obedient. And I think Marcella was right as well about being an activist and a professional. The two things do go together though I still have a big question mark as if we are over-professionalizing activists and has that got in the way? And also, I want to put the question again, what are we going to do about mothers having a children taken of them because domestic abuse? It's a massive issue, almost becoming a pandemic level and I think we need to be putting all heads together and do more about it. Thank you very much for inviting me to Istanbul, had a lovely time and thank you for being part of the panel, everybody else, thank you.

Marcella Pirrone: I can only add my thanking. I knew that when the friends of Mor Çatı do something it for sure will be interesting and in fact my expectation was totally fulfilled and I am very happy to have known Catriona, Jessica and Ghada because I heard a lot of interesting things and I feel that we are engaged on the same goal. So, thank you and it's almost enriching and we always take home something so thank you very much really for this lovely occasion and exchange.

Jessica Spraos: I think we echo the same sentiments. Thank you very much for hosting and thank you for all the wonderful questions. It's not always that you get such tremendous engagement from people who are tuning in to events like these. Agreed that lots of things have been learned and this was a really wonderful opportunity and such a great transnational conversation.

Marcella Pirrone: And last we will not forget your Turkish women with all these movement about Istanbul Convention, we will really keep an eye on Turkey like we've always done. We really like and love your engagement and your courage. Thank you.

Ghada Hatem: Thank you for this meeting, I personally feel very close to Turkish women because I was born in Lebanon, and I know very well this culture. So don't give up.

Selime Büyükgöze: Thank you everyone for your presentations and this stimulating discussion.



WORKSHOP 1: SPECIAL NEEDS, DIFFERENT PRACTICES

Zeynep Ekin Aklar: The title of this workshop is “Special Needs, Different Practices”. Because this workshop is focusing on special needs and different practices, we will be listening to various international practices throughout. We will be starting with Ceyda Keskin. Ceyda Keskin is working for BFF—the Federal Association of Rape Crisis Centers and Women’s Counselling Centers. We are talking about a hundred and seventy specialized counselling and crisis centers. Ceyda graduated in 2015 in Germany from Philipps University, Marbourg Pedagogy and Gender Studies Faculty. Since 2018, she has been working in BFF as the project coordinator. She is especially working in the fields of violence against women with disabilities, sexual abuse in workplaces, and implementation practices of Istanbul Convention in Europe. We would like to give the floor to Ceyda Keskin.

Ceyda Keskin: Thank you for your kind invitation. I am participating in this conference from Germany. Today I will be giving you some information about the violence and discrimination against women in Germany and I will try to give you some information about how they are accessing to supporting services. First and foremost, I would like to introduce you to our association BFF. BFF is the abbreviation of Federal Association of Rape Crisis Centers and Women’s Counselling Centers. It is a place where we have two hundred women counseling and women helpline centers and it has a feminist infrastructure. It is working in order to help women exposed to violence, women and girls subjected to violence and it is providing counseling services within. In addition, BFF is also exchanging information and experience with other civil society organizations working in the field and carrying out campaigns. Our perspectives with regards to this issue as well as our activities are incorporated in the reports. We have recommendations to decision makers and policy makers in Germany. Our main aim is, of course, to ensure that women and the girls in Germany have a life which is free of violence and which is independent. Of course, when we talk about women, we should also take into consideration women with disabilities. That is why we have been carrying out a project for the last twelve years. It is called the Suse Project. Suse Project is focusing on several areas. Our main aim is to strengthen women and girls with disabilities. In order to ensure that, we are carrying out several training activities in this field. We are trying to collaborate with various institutions, and we are exchanging ideas, opinions. In addition, in order to provide access for women and girls to counseling services and protection services, we are trying to make sure that these centers are inclusive, more inclusive and they do not create any disabilities or any borders. So, Suse Project is actually providing guidance to women and girls. In 2021, this year in Potsdam, Germany in a shelter for people with disabilities one person was killed and one was injured. So, police arrested, detained one person, a caretaker in that shelter. It did not really take part in press. Many people protested this. So, people demanded that in a carehouse and in these types of closed institutions action should

be taken against these types of violence, attacks, violent behaviors. So, for people with disabilities these types of behaviors are unfortunately a part of the society. It is not rare. Especially in close areas such as schools, hospitals or in the workshops where people with disabilities are living or working, in these types of areas people are exposed to violence and one out of two women with disabilities might be subjected to violence, might be victims of violence. Also, especially women with hearing disabilities and women living and working in closed institutions for the disabled are exposed to violence more frequently. Another detail that caught my eye in the research is that many women with disabilities think that violence is normal. They think, "It has always been like this in my life". These research results make us ask the following questions: Why are women with disabilities more likely to be exposed to violence and what are the reasons for this? First of all, we need to say that there are many prejudices against disabled women in our society. For example, the needs of people with disabilities, and especially women with disabilities, are often not taken seriously and there are limitations to their independence. Society thinks that people with disabilities do not experience sexuality, or they do not have much idea about it; the society is laden with prejudices in this respect as well. This is why people with disabilities, especially women, do not receive education and information about sexuality or about protecting themselves against violence. Women with disabilities often experience different forms of discrimination in their daily lives. For example, they have very bad experiences when they seek help from state institutions. They are often marginalized and so they need a lot of strength to cope with everyday life and organize support. Apart from that, mostly women with disabilities are dependent on other people around them. This dependency often leads to violence. The family often holds the legal rights of people with intellectual disabilities, for example, and this sometimes creates problems. For example, if the violence is perpetrated by the person who acts as a legal guardian, it can be even more difficult for the woman with disabilities to talk about the violence and ask for a change of legal guardian.

The German equivalent of a guardian ad litem is as follows: Some people with mental disabilities are incapable of defending their own rights, and in this case, the state appoints a legal counselor to defend their rights on their behalf. As I mentioned before, women with disabilities constitute the most vulnerable group to violence, but they are also the least likely group to seek their legal rights when they are subjected to violence. There are major obstacles in seeking their legal rights. For example, criminal courts constitute one of the major obstacles in seeking their rights. Women with disabilities cannot find answers to many of their needs there.

As it is for everyone, it is very difficult for women with disabilities to understand the language of the law, especially if they are mentally disabled.

Unfortunately, we cannot talk about translating the legal language into an easy language that they can understand. The testimonies of disabled women who have been subjected to violence are generally not valued within the judicial system, because there is a prejudice against disabled people within that system. In other words, the testimonies of the disabled people are regarded with skepticism.

In the Suse project, we examined the situation of women with disabilities living in closed institutions, rehabilitation centers, and care homes. We realized that the risk of violence is highest in closed institutions such as homes and workplaces. This is already stated in the research.

We concluded that there is no visible national effort in Germany to prevent violence in these areas. Not only is this law not adequate, but also the institutions themselves seem to have not much of an idea about this issue. For example, they don't have a serious concept or manifesto for protection, and even if a few of them do, they are not implemented seriously. In this case, although it is necessary for such closed institutions externally supervised and controlled, I have to state that there is not enough work on this issue. Meanwhile, even the institutions where women can seek refuge when they are subjected to violence, such as women's shelters or women's solidarity centers, do not have conditions suitable enough for women with disabilities. This creates major obstacles before the delivery of support provided to them.

After introducing the discrimination and barriers faced by women with disabilities, I would like to explain what strategies are needed to ensure comprehensive and effective protection against violence against women with disabilities. As you already know, the Istanbul Convention and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities guide both us and the signatory states in this regard. These two conventions require us to implement the following: States must take effective and preventive measures to protect women with disabilities from violence and abuse. Women with disabilities have the right to unhindered and non-discriminatory access to legal solutions as well as other institutions. In the Suse project, based on these two goals, we have contemplated about the kind of changes we can make in women's counseling centers and women's hotlines. We thought about how to render women's counseling centers more inclusive and open to women with disabilities. We also designed implementation methods.

We understood the importance of forming networks in reaching this goal. We implemented pilot women's counseling centers in five regions. First of all, we asked ourselves the following question: in order to reach women with disabilities which institutions or people do we need to get into connect with? These women's counseling centers were in constant dialogue with different disability support and assistance associations, nursing home workers, police, activist women with disabilities, judges, lawyers, and doctors and they

created a network. Organization and the people connected to this network wanted to create an inclusive solution to violence and discrimination. It is very important to approach this situation locally, and we asked ourselves these questions in order to figure out how we could focus more on this issue.

For example, what already exists in our area of work? Are there any networks or working groups already established? Over which networks can we build this inclusive service? What are the gaps and how can we overcome them? While coming up with inclusive ideas, it is necessary to perceive women with disabilities as experts in this field and ask them the following questions: what kind of help do you expect from women's counseling centers? What do you need? What issues do we need to cover?

In order to gain insight about people with disabilities and their living conditions and to better understand their specific situation, it is necessary to be in dialogue with women with disabilities and to involve them in the working groups. Only in this way can we build a solid network and a barrier-free system of assistance and protection.

Important key persons in this issue are the staff working on women's support systems and the staff working in associations for the support and assistance of persons with disabilities. We have to be in a constant dialog with these key people and address this issue. We have to take into account the difficulties and the discrimination women with disabilities experience.

Women's counseling centers who are members of the BFF different practices for women with disabilities. People with disabilities are often portrayed as a homogeneous group, regardless of their disability, and their differences are not taken into account. Women with different types of disabilities may have a variety of problems and needs. Additionally, besides the specific problems and needs, persons with disabilities with different gender identities and sexual orientations may experience violence and rights violations differently. It should not be forgotten that women with disabilities are subjected to multiple discrimination. Our women's counseling centers try to make these important points visible and conduct workshops, carry out group work and organize campaigns accordingly. Mostly BFF's women's counseling centers create training programs on different forms of violence for women with disabilities. These training programs can also be self-defense courses. If a woman with a disability cannot go to a counseling center on her own when she is experiencing violence, the staff at the counseling centers can provide a mobile service and visit the women's living quarters or nursing homes and offer counselling to them there. Apart from that, women's cafes can be set up, or easily accessible informative materials can be produced. This could be a booklet or an informative video in sign language. In order to create a space for protection against violence, women's counseling centers should be in contact with permanent residents of closed institutions and nursing

homes. Women's counselling centers should carry out educational activities on sexuality and independence.

Apart from these, of course, criminal courts also need to be inclusive and accessible. Specialized staff in courts and police stations need to better understand and be informed about the specific living conditions and needs of women with disabilities affected by violence. In addition, psychosocial support is necessary for women with disabilities in courts and language-assisted accompaniment should be provided.

Closed institutions and nursery homes should not be left uncontrolled. For protection against violence to work efficiently, these institutions need to be externally controlled and have principles for protection against violence. These principles should be actively implemented as a quality indicator. Additionally, access to counseling centers outside the institutions should be facilitated and these counseling centers or centers where women can direct their complaints should be independent of the institution. In Germany, there are actually female representatives of women with disabilities in institutions and these women are feminists trained by women's counseling centers. They play an important role in protecting against violence, but these representatives are often not taken seriously by the institutions in which they work. Women's counseling centers need to empower the representatives of disabled women. Only then we protect women with disabilities from violence in an inclusive way. Of course, the women's aid system, i.e. women's shelters and women's counseling centers, should be needs-based and barrier-free. Other places also need to be designed to be inclusive of women with disabilities.

We need to work harder to break down our prejudices against people with disabilities. We need to respect the boundaries and free will of women with disabilities and protect their privacy and private lives. We need to create opportunities for participation, especially for women with disabilities. While discussing these issues, women with disabilities should also have an opinion and a say in things. Instead of approaching women with disabilities with prejudice, it is necessary to create spaces to empower them, to voice their demands for their rights and to prepare the ground for their organization. Only in this way can they have a say in their own rights.

Zeynep Ekin Aklar: Thank you very much Ceyda. Our next speaker is Jenny Westerstrand. ROKS is from the National Organisation for Women's Shelters and Young Women's Shelters in Sweden. Jenny is the president of ROKS.

Jenny Westerstrand: Thank you very much for inviting me. I am the president of the National Organization for Women's Shelters and Young Women Shelters. We are the only separate shelter, the only organizers' shelters. There is not any organization that has many kinds of members that are

bigger than us but the biggest only shelter organization. We have approximately ninety shelters today, some of them only women shelters, some of them are young women shelters, some are only young women's shelter. ROKS grew to become a movement due to the lack of support to women living with violent men and not being substance users or unemployed than in otherwise marginalized in society. Because in Sweden, not in many other societies' violence is looked upon something that is framed as a social deviance and hence something that belongs to the margins of the society. But in the 1980's as women organization developed, we found that there was a need for women to organize around violence, sort of "normal" women as well. Through the course of the years, we saw the need for the special measures directed towards young women as well. It gradually became clear that young women, or it has been clear for a long time, but the research came across those figures as well that young women are incredibly exposed to violence. There are sexual violence spanning from gang rapes and things posted on the Internet where women are humiliated to unwanted touching, cat-calling or hateful messages over social media. There is a wide range of sexual violence directed towards young women in Sweden. At the same time, we have a culture where gender equality is sort of a religion almost. There are many watchdogs that want us to talk about Sweden as a gender-equal society or almost gender-equal society. So, therefore sometimes it causes a stir when we speak about the young women's exposure to violence. In some ways it is OK, in some arenas it is OK to talk about this but if you sort of merge and blend it into the general picture of what society is like, then it might cause some commotion and resistance. What is the nature of the violence that young women are exposed to in Sweden? I do not think that it is very much different to, well, there are some differences, but the violence looks very much alike. One thing is that young women and young men in Sweden, they socialize a lot. This is, of course, something that is good and should be good, should be positive. But it cannot be denied at the same time that young women are exposed to a lot of violence in these social areas: in schools, in public places, in parties, social events, and so on. There is a lot of violence going on like a general backdrop in young women's lives. Also, we have partner relations of course between young men and young women and you would wish that this violence is something that older and more old-fashioned men are committing but of course not, sadly. We can see that there is a lot of violence going on in young people's relationships also, young heterosexual people's relationships and it is not the young women that are violent but their boyfriends. This includes control, coercion, and sexual violence. In Sweden we have a growing number of young men that are buying sex and the consumption of pornography is very high amongst Swedish men. As many as 80% are consuming pornography in now and then and quite frequently. We also see in statistics that the young men are more conservative than older men are when it comes to notions of how partner relationships should go about. So, we have some troubling trends going on

in Sweden. When we see trends in sexual behavior that imitate violent pornography and here we have slapping, gagging and suffocating that are practices that many young women come to see as mainstream and hence are exposed to quite regularly. Many young women contact our shelters for young women about these issues and those practices. They find it very hard to sort of decide if it is OK or not. Many young women find it challenging to analyze the consequences. They might think it is OK for a while, but then they start to feel very bad, and the consequences are severe. Sometimes, they also feel it is hard to be boring not wanting to be a part of those practices. At the same time these practices are things that we actually do talk about in Sweden as I said in some arenas. But I would say that when it comes to incest, father's sexual violence against daughters and brothers use of their sisters makes it sexual violence. We have not spoken about that kind of violence for like twenty years. The last time we did, it caused a national crisis, a war between psychologists and feminists and different branches of psychology. It seems to me that society dealt with it by just burying it. It is not an issue that we have on the political agenda, but we see it a lot in those who contact our young women's shelters. This is a problem in Sweden. We are striving to put it on the agenda because incest is something that is very much not talked about. The young women's shelters started in 1997. The first one was in Stockholm. These shelters are associations of young women who have gathered to strengthen young women's rights, their own rights, and other sisters' rights and to give support to those who were exposed to violence in different forms. We do not have any strict limit regarding the age, we support girls as young as twelve years when they contact us, and up to over thirty. So that differs a lot. But those who are giving the support are over eighteen and are trained by the centers, the shelters. The support is given mainly by chat and individual contact if the girl wants, if the young woman wants. We meet and support the young women not as experts on their lives, that is not what we are, but we are supporters of her and we aim to strengthen her. We are very strong believers in her own abilities as we heard in the last presentation. It is so important not to take the initiative away from them because that is what the perpetrator is doing. He is taking her agency away. So, we try to just put it back and we try to make her find her path forward. As we also had many women have problems with seeing how violence is normal... Violence tends to be normalized, therefore it is hard to find and say how it becomes a pattern in your everyday life. It is also hard not to blame yourself because that is what he is doing all the time. He is telling you that it is your fault that he is hitting you and he is calling you names and so on. So, we give her, our young women, shelters give her new words for what he is doing and give her the sort of method to interpret what she is going through in another way. Also, we all are talking about violence in a gendered way. In Sweden, as in many other countries in Europe, it has become accustomed now to talk about personal violence, violence in intimate relationships and so on. We think

that this is something we absolutely should not do. You need to gender the violence in order to see what role it feels in women's and girls' lives. It is such a mainstream thing, so common and it is so widespread that we need to analyze it as something. That is a part of our society and part of the gender relation. We definitely use the gendered violence all the time, but we see many other big actors in Sweden are sort of speaking of gendered violence the first two minutes that they are talking and then they drop it and talk about young people's violence which is quite disturbing I think since young women are not violent in Sweden at least I do not think elsewhere either, not in any common way. So, we give support over chat as I said, that is the main contact way that we offer our support from the young women shelter side. That has its own challenges, of course, because you do not actually always know who you are chatting with. We know this during the Covid-19 pandemic, there is a sort of increase of men chatting, starting a conversation saying that they need help and then afterwards, they asks questions such as "What are you wearing?", "What do you look like?", "What do you want in bed?" and so on. That is not the normal case fortunately. But in order to chat you need to know what you are doing because you do not have a face to relate to, you do not have a tone of voice either. You do not know, they can come with many serious things in a chat such as "I am about to hurt myself right now" and so on. When you do not have a person in front of you, you need strategies and competence to, sort of, act in that situation. You do not even know if the chat will last two minutes, if the silence will last two minutes because sometimes the chat will be very, sort of, go on and off. Young women you are chatting with are thinking or crying also. So, there is not a lot of control in the situation. Then, you have to deal with your own frustration and your own fears. You do not know what happens next or what happened then. Because probably you will not meet this girl in a chat room again, or you might. That is something that we really are trying to do, that is to connect and to take the contact further. I should also say that we also need to close the chat in an ethical way because we do not think it is useful either to... I mean if somebody is feeling bad they could sit and chat with you for hours but that is not the kind of support we are able to give. So we need to take it down to a time frame that is rational for all. In spite of all these, the chat is an enormously important first step to get contact. This not least, as I say when it comes to topics that have no words in society either... I mean it is OK for you to just chat and suggest things that you do not know anything about, just say, "This is OK. Would you like to think about this? And you do not have to be ashamed." You can try things that you might not dare to try if you have someone in front of you. Also, if the girl is living in a place where the society of control, I mean if it is a small place where everybody knows each other, then it is very important for her to have somewhere to turn. But the shelters also are striving to make individual and personal contact with as many as possible of those who contact us even though there are many contacts. So, I should say that the

normal procedure is that we do not get that contact but we do in many cases as well. I suppose like many other national hotlines also, we do not try to be national because we think that if you are really going to give help that is of the best kind, it is very good if you kind of know sort of where she lives so you give her suggestions on what to do, where to turn to. Because we are after all, just one first step. We are a second step when it comes to finding friendship, support and formulating political ideas and so on. But many of those who contact us are feeling terribly bad and are really having hard experiences. They need further help. So, we should be able to help her. We need to know something about her local society. We think that those national chat lines or sometimes in Sweden, I am not saying that this is the case other countries, because sometimes a national hotline is everything there is, but in Sweden we are a bit scared that the national hotlines, sort of, are like a hoover, that are taking up the quotations from young women and they publish the quotations in different papers and saying "Look! What we are listening to." This is horrible. But the women, young women are not getting the best help that they could get if they got closer to their own communities. I will not be very negative though. Of course, national hotlines are very important as well. But there is one big issue here for our young women's shelters and that is the case that in Sweden up till you are eighteen, you are still a child, and as long as you are a child, you are able to get some help. But if you are in need of help after eighteen, so if you have been in prostitution between you are fourteen and eighteen, you really need support and counselling. It is extremely hard to get that. We also see that those clinics or those actors that are doing very good job they are taken down and put up again in different forms that do not suit the women's needs. Women are told that "You can only get eight times of counselling. Then you need to get diagnosed for being able to move on to healthcare." So, she needs to be branded sick in some way. Instead, if you are a man who buys sex, then you can get counseling for a year to stop buying sex. I think it is incredible. When the Swedish law on prostitution that prohibits the purchase of sexual services, it is celebrated twenty years now, last years or so... There is now a conference about what do about the next twenty years. There is not a word about the young women in prostitution but there is one point at the programme about the men who buy them. So, we have this very much gender-equal way of approaching violence in Sweden where men, we need to find, some kind of, that they are victims as well and they are obviously then victims of buying sex, I do not know how we should interpret it. But many of our young women shelters are actually feeling that it is an ethical problem to, sort of, advocate that young women should contact us and start sharing when there is no society at home who can you turn to. So, that is something I would really like to pass on here. I should also say that our young women shelters are focused on violence, some actors that turn to young women are starting from other angles like, "Do you have issues with your body?", "Do you have issues with your identity?"

or so. We have chosen another approach; we think that we do not want young women to have to go a path through other problems. We want to show them that we are here to listen, we are experts on violence, we have heard many stories and we have shared. We have our own lives in this violent society so that you can come to us. We have a direct approach in that way. Lastly, I would like to say, we always believe in her, and we never question her choices and her strategies. We are always walking with her as long as we are making it easier for her to put her life together, but it is her life, and we are very much aware of that. One difficult thing though, is when should we be calling the police if we find out something. Of course, we do not do that as a method but of course there have been cases where things are, if it is a child, things can be very ethically problematic. We are not authorities; we are working as just free actors so we do not have a legal demand on us to call the police. But we, of course, talk to her about it. We talk and try to find out what she is thinking about that. Also, of course, there is a political aspect of this not only supporting but carrying voices out to society and being the ones that know what is like to be a young woman in Sweden, in the shadow of violence. So, that is an important role the young women shelters have. We have had many important projects regarding sugar-dating and TikTok and those social platforms where the young women shelters have studied how they are grooming young women and children into sexual contexts and so on. We have an enormous knowledge, it is like a treasure of knowledge from this movement that is a part of the shelter movement in Sweden. Although there are no fiscal shelters, there are also brutes, statistical meetings and that is something that we are really trying to develop. Now, I would like to show you something that we are very proud of. As the first actor in Sweden we have developed two applications for smartphones, one for the women shelters and one for the young women shelters. This looks like, well you just see it on your phone, it looks like anything, it has a common name, it looks like sort of "feel good" app with quotations and some "How you can make a good day for yourself: Take a walk!" and so on. If you do something special with it, it comes up hidden behind and it is only in Swedish at this point. The women's shelters app, I think, has different languages. But this is Valkommen. You can document things, you can chat with us. There you can reach those who have open chat immediately. In the documentation, you click on the day, you go in, you can save photos, you can write sort of a diary. You can e-mail this documentation to a secret e-mail that you have chosen. Of course, this is not for the young women that are extremely controlled. But this could be something for young women in prostitution or with a violent boyfriend that is violent occasionally or if you are just feel mistreated. You can write it down. So, it is a way of documenting things. This is what it looks like: the date, the place and "Tell us what happens." it says. "Think about writing from your own perspective," it says. "What you have experienced." The more details you can write is good but write what you can. Then you can exit the website. When I took

this photo all of the young women shelters are closed but if they are open you can see it there and you can come to that shelter. We have about thirty, twenty five-thirty shelters and they all have different opening hours. So, we think that the situation for young women in Sweden is hard and the pandemic situation has made it even worse. We think that Sweden does not really support the existing laws and the existing clinics and actors. It has a constant longing for reforms and new initiatives. When you are dealing with reforms all the time, when you are dealing with new initiatives, you never have to stop and, sort of, take a look at what is it that we are actually dealing with? What do young women's lives look like at this point? We have a sort of a general picture in Sweden. I think that we are a feminist country. We have our politics against violence oriented towards a feminist goal and gender-equality and young women are important and so on. But in reality, prostitution is growing, the income gap is growing, young women are feeling increasingly ill, their mental conditions are getting not rapidly worse, but it is not getting better. So, we are worried in that sense. The good thing is that the government has said that the young women shelters and the women shelters should be financed on a regular basis. So far, we do not know from ear to ear what we will get in fundings. The other thing is that election is Sweden in this coming year 2022 and when there is a new government, if there is that promise, it is not worth so much. So, we do not know really what to do or how the funding will look in the future.

Zeynep Ekin Aklar: Thank you very much Jenny. Our next speaker is Şenay Dur. Şenay Dur joins us from İmece, which is in London, England. Şenay has been working with young women since her university years and she is one of the founders of the Association of Turkish Language Learners in London. For more than a decade, she has been actively involved in various organizations that combat violence against women and girls in London both in managerial and leadership positions. She is currently the director of İmece Women's Center, which works with black and minoritized women, including Turkish, Kurdish, and Turkish Cypriot women. İmece is an expert organization in its field, but it is also one of the organizations that has supported thousands of women and girls in its forty-year history and has voiced their voices in every field. Now Şenay will talk about İmece's work with black and minoritized women.

Şenay Dur: I would like to thank you for inviting me to this workshop. İmece is one of the sister organizations that has known Mor Çatı for a very long time. Since we work more with women from Turkey, we also continue to struggle with the problems in Turkey. I just want to talk about the black and minoritized women's experiences, support and challenges in the UK, but in England in particular. With the work we do as İmece we focus on London because that is where the most of violence against women and girls kind of happen and shape the general national policies and etc. I mean it

is one of those things where the big bosses said like, parliament that, where lot of the things happen. So, it was very interesting to hear the things that Ceyda and Jenny were talking about because it just shows once again that there is so much contrast across the world even. But in countries like us, whether it is England, Sweden, Germany or any other Western or European countries, experiences but at the same time the challenges and practices are very similar. So we have kind of contrasted established ways to work and this has been the case since the 80s. It is quite nice to see how Ceyda focused on disabled women, talking in ableism side of things and then Jenny gave us a nice context around the young women with the intersection of needs which kind of like in my overwriting thing is one of the things I want to talk about as well because disabled women and young women, they kind of get missed all the time. Their needs are mostly unseen. It goes invisible and with the overarching Black and minoritized women's lives, it comes through a work of everyday. So, we totally understand all the dynamics Ceyda and Jenny has spoken about. I am sure, likewise, with the other parts of their work, they will find that everything intersects with each other. It is never one issue thing for women unfortunately and we know that. We are hit in multiple facades when it comes to our gender identity and how we have been facing these barriers, I suppose. I mean, I did to put a bit in my introduction for Imece. Imece has been operating since 1982. It was formed by a group of Asian women from the Turkish, Kurdish and Turkish Cypriot backgrounds. They have identified that gap of that need for our women in England because there was a massive immigration at that time, in the late 80s. So, they came together and created this beautiful organization and they are still trying to keep that forward. Over the years obviously, in the last ten or fifteen years especially, we have bigger focus outside of our whole group as well, reaching out to more black minoritized women. We have been cut some resources, they are making it ever so difficult for organizations like us to focus on that core group, a community that we initially set to serve. When we recognize the needs of those black and minoritized women who might not have such representation and we believe that we are in better place to represent them as well rather than generic white organizations. I mean in my talk I am going to give a bit more context to how black minoritized women's issues have been kind of diluted or gone unseen and kind of imprint in the bigger picture those unrecognized, just like a disabled woman or a young woman. You know they will say, "OK. We will just focus on the violence you face but disregard every other additional need you might have." It is quite interesting in the last two eighteen months to two years now with Covid as well, what we have seen is a horrendous picture, horrific. And I am pretty sure sisters from Mor Çatı or Jenny's organization, everyone must have seen a huge increase in demand and in the violence and it is not just a volume, it is a severity of the violence that is changing because we are actually confining women and survivors in homes where we put them in prisons with their perpetrators which is making

things ever so difficult. Then we need to explain cyber-violence, cyber-abuse over the Internet has gone crazy in London, in England as well. Those are the kind of things I am not going to dwell so much into because they have already been thoroughly explained in the past two presentations. But what I want to kind of stress which we do every time we speak to especially the decision makers or policy makers, it is that you are talking about Covid, you are acting like domestic violence against women and girls are here with the pandemic but it did not. Women have been facing the pandemic of violence for centuries. It is a pandemic within a pandemic we are going through as women, and they need to kind of acknowledge that. That is kind of what I want to overwrite in picture and some of the needs I want to talk about are the black minoritized women. We need to understand that black minoritized women, like the previous two, it is an intersectional issues. They have intersectional needs and with by intersectional, I mean intersectionality was coined by black feminists. And it stands for black feminism which was around way before the mainstream white feminism that has kind of emerged during late 60s and 70s. Black feminism dates back to slavery and the word was coined by black feminist women. Because it was used as a way of further oppressing black women, it was not just the gender identity, it was their gender, it was their race, and plus identities which were attacked. So, and to this day still, we know black women and minoritized women such as us in foreign countries to stay, we still face, we do not just face attack on gender as a woman but also face that additional attack, intersectional attack on the race and the class side of things as well. So, we cannot, when we talk about the issues of black and minoritized women, we cannot really separate it from the intersectional issues that were kind of analyzed and put in perspectives by many, particularly, black women in history. And then, from there we do also have the multiple support needs such as ableism for disabled women which still happens in our black and minoritized communities, heteronormative behaviors where heterosexuality is the only accepted sexuality as a mainstream perspective. Also, ageism which is an intersectional need and women say ageism we focus a lot with older age, then I think we lose the essence around a preventative work we need to do with young women. Young women in that sense, in terms of ageism, go especially young single women, they go, single mothers, they go unseen for various reasons. At the same time, if you are from a black minoritized background these are all the issues you are facing day to day. Around these needs, we kind of acknowledge that there are things that in terms of processes or statutory services it is where voluntary sector service and I think it was Jenny who mentioned it, we are not the authorities, we do not have a statutory power. Only if we did, it sort of, would have been very, very different. And they will mention about the criminal justice system and how things are very kind of shaken in those areas. I think we need to remember violence against women and girls is a gender-based violence. It is a system designed by men, for men. Even when we look at the prisons... I have done some work with prisons,

we found out most of the women in prisons, two thirds of them almost have been subjected to domestic abuse. The reason behind why there have been in the prison is somehow related to the domestic violence they have received, whether it is prostitution, whether it is being, even if it is drugs, if they are in prison for drugs, it is related to the male violence, gang violence or them being getting hooked on drugs so they can continue with prostitution, so they can have control over. It is a power and control thing, and we know it is a system designed by men for men. It is a very big thing we are battling on a daily basis. It does not matter wherever you are in the world. You know, that is a very universal thing for all women. Like I said, yes it changes from country to country in terms of practices. So, if we talk about some of the practices here in England, you have a national violence against women and girls strategy say for instance it comes out of a parliament. They signed it all. They do now have a DA commissioner, domestic abuse commissioner who kind of oversees the domestic abuse bill, so domestic abuse has now become a bill, it became an act. There are certain things that we expect the government to take action on, to put in place, kind of, hold statutory responsibility by the central government and local governments which will hugely work much closer. And every local government, obviously every burrow, and all the constituencies, have allocated resources to allocate violence against women and girls work, and that includes the perpetrator work basically, to put the accountability to the perpetrators. I am going to go to the next one because it overlaps with the barriers. Those barriers we call systemic. Because the black minoritized women's needs are not understood and at times they are unseen, they are made invisible. Especially in the last two years, following the killing of George Floyd by a police officer in the United States, and the following things and even the Sarah Everard's case here in London... She was brutally abducted, tortured to murder by a police officer. Just recently, he is being prosecuted and charged and there is a big debate around that where the chief of metropolitan police, you know, the London police can actually a woman, in particular that fact hurts me even more. A woman gets on national TV and says all women, all of us, we feel unsafe and we do not trust that police officer when they approach us. A servant police officer who we pay to protect us, we feel unsafe by them, we need to hail a bus, to stop a bus, wave at the bus, try to seek protection from that. It is a very complex situation. There are these allocated funds and staff and then that on local bases, they allocate the violence the women and the girls organizations the support, the survivors and women and girls who need support and refuge, etc. Even within that for black minority communities, one of our biggest challenge is we know that racism is institutional, we know it happens from the top. So, there is no way we can claim otherwise for our sector as well, unfortunately. Racism still happens and unfortunately generic white mainstream women's organizations may not understand those intersectional needs that minoritized women have and it has been evident. That is why we exist, that is why Imece exists. That

is why all the other black minoritized women's organizations exist. Any existence happens through a need. We exist because there is a need, you know, I do not think I will see in my lifetime where black and minoritized organizations are no longer needed. It is an answer to a need. So, we exist due to a need but especially since the 2008 crisis with all the government cuts and stuff... More and more they want women sector to do more for less and when that distribution happens in women sector it is not equitable. It does not, kind of, take into account that, you know, almost forty to fifty percent of the survivors are black and minoritized women. They are not funding that amount of money to the specialists' organizations to do the specialists' work, who understand the dynamics. So they are black minoritized women serving the black minoritized survivors. So, we have a lot of back and forth lobbying and being very proactive, we have just introduced an anti-racist charter which is signed by many women's organizations both black and minoritized and generic women's organizations. Because what we expect is that we would like to see that reassurance from sister organizations even if they are not black and minoritized, even if they have a different specialism. We expect that commitment to fight or combat racism alongside. What we are doing is a lot of lobbying with the decision-makers, with those who set the policies. We say, "This is your time to get things right. There is an opportunity for you. It is not about for in things on paper but we need to see things in practice." basically. So, there is a loads of systemic barriers when we talk about barriers black and minoritized women have in access and support, constantly things like language barriers, language is always thrown at us as a barrier. Language is not a barrier. It is the accessibility of statutory organizations creating, that is a barrier. It is a systemic barrier. That should not be a barrier, every single women should have clear access to appropriate translation, interpreters who understand the dynamics of those communities, of those needs. Everything they put forward as a barrier actually returns back on them so, that is one of the things where we can speak of a kind of wakening about "Do not put the onus on the survivor." There are lots of talks about their lack of reporting to the police and because of that one of the things I had, one of the conversations I had just last week and one of the meetings I attended and there were high ranking police officers there as well. I am like, "A white woman being killed by a white police officer, a serving white police officer. How do you expect us the minoritized women to go and trust the police and report?" So, because women have their own experiences from their home countries, they have very bad experiences with the authorities, with the police from their homelands. Yet to come to a country, trying to seek help to find similar experiences, it just deters them from reporting to the police. Because they get labelled, their needs are not understood, their community dynamics are not understood, there is not that cultural sensitivity to all those women. And they are not believed, there are loads of issues that come. They are constantly being re-victimized and re-traumatized by statutory

authorities. That is why they do not report, that is why they do not go for a prosecution. When you look at sexual violence in particular, the level of prosecutions is horrendous. It is unacceptable. Hardly any rapist gets prosecuted. The lack of evidence, change of statement... They use every excuse under the sun to not give a prosecution or even when they get prosecuted, sentencing it is so bad, one it is not a deterrent and two, the only deterrence it has, it deters women from coming forward. So, it is a very complex system in that sense. So, in terms of barriers, I am not going to talk about barriers that us women face because I think every woman around this workshop, we all know all the barriers that community, the stigma, the taboos and everything else. I wanted to focus more on the barriers of accessing help. They put the burden of accessibility on the survivors. When we come to support and challenges, we have already covered some of the things. Specialists, they need to be specialized in their areas whether it is working with disabled women, or whether it is working with young women in particular or black and minoritized women, they have to be specialists not just us the voluntary sector but I think it is more important when it comes to the statutory sector. They need to build on those specialisms, they need to first start having equality within them. We need to see women with multiple identities, we need to see more black and minoritized women in those offices, we need to see more disabled women. It needs to be representative of the communities they claim to reach. There needs to be a genuine understanding of intersectional needs, there needs to be that dialogue, it needs to be inclusive resource allocation. They need to make sure it is equitable. So, it is not about giving the same money to everyone. It is about giving what is needed in which area. So, it goes, it is a step beyond equality or service provisions, you know. You cannot say, "There you are! Disabled Women's Organization, Black and Minoritized Women's Organization and White Women's Organization, you all get one." That does not answer the need so that is not intersectional, inclusive or equitable. Then the social injustices continue because whilst one can use that resources and might be enough and it might answer their needs. It does not answer our needs. It has to be equitable. And that is one of the terms, in the sense of equality, diversity, and inclusion that policy in that is very outdated and in countries like us, we know it is used to cover lot of the inequalities within. So, if we want to tackle those inequalities, we need to make an equitable, inclusive and ultimately social justice where the barriers are removed, the systemic barriers are removed for those women to have equal inclusive access to the support they need. It needs to be non-tokenistic, so we really had enough of... I am going to give an example, a generic example, of a workplace. If it is ten men, they will hire one woman to tick that box or if it is ten women they will have one black or minoritized women and they will tick that box. And they will have one disabled woman and tick the other box. But that will not go beyond ticking those boxes and having a tokenistic approach. It really needs to be inclusive, it needs to be entrenched and it

needs to be genuinely understood, you know, they need to build a genuine dialog and honestly, you know, take accountability, that is what we expect. We want them to take accountability, we need for it to be called out. Because we know many women that come forward, they are asked to leave all their identities at the door, including their most prominent identity of being a women. You know, I want to feel included and I want to feel safe enough to go in to a place as a minoritized women not leaving any of my identities at the door. But the expectation is, if it is a generic context we are talking about, they want you being a woman left outside, leave your gender identity outside. If you want to survive in this, you need to think like us. You need to think and act like a man, basically. Otherwise, you will not survive in that situation which is the case for the black and minoritized women for all the time. The national acknowledgment and action in supporting black and minoritized women is streamlined. We have been in lobbying and in campaigning a lot and we are in a very sensitive point in England at this moment and time where national work strategy is reviewed, the London strategy is being reviewed. So, lot of those statutory authorities are reviewing the violence against women and girls strategies where we try to make sure that we are represented as black and minoritized women. I mean, we do have a number of like second tier organization we are members of. Unfortunately they could not be here today but. They have been doing a lot of work with us and take that voice and we just want to reclaim our voice, basically, as black and minoritized women. We are not invisible, and we refuse to be seeing as invisible, we refuse to be treated like, "Oh, yes! They are poor black and minoritized women, let us help them!" They need to get out of that mentality because we are experts in our needs, we are professionals delivering that work on behalf of, we are the ones who carry the black and minoritized women's voices because we are them. We know their experiences because that are our experience as well, as a woman, as a black and minoritized person. So, it is about getting through that tokenistic approach and having that genuine national approach to it. But unfortunately, it does not seem like it is going to happen any time soon because we have seen, like I said, especially with Sarah Everard's case. I mean even, just a little note on that, in the same week when Sarah was brutally murdered, two black women, two sisters were also abducted and brutally murdered by a satanist. There was no coverage. You would not know because not even people in England, in the UK know. I mean, what grants that media coverage? Who do you need to be to have that coverage? Because you see one woman, even the members of the royal family go and pay their respects. What I am saying here is, why did you do that for Sarah, that needed not to be. That case, what is happening, what we are discussing now, we have to discuss but we are saying that every woman's life should be taken in that validity, you know, every woman murdered... We know, almost three women are killed every week. So, you cannot pick and choose which is more valid to cover. You know, the media plays a huge role. I mean with this case, we

know it made it possible for us to challenge these institutions who were being very misogynistic. I mean, the Minister of Justice actually made a theme that misogyny is wrong from men to women but also from women to men. I mean, even in that sense, we expect this person to design the framework of the justice system in England. A woman cannot be... It is called misandry not misogyny. A woman cannot be... That is the meaning, the definition of that "the hate for women", you know, it is crazy. They do not even know these terms and they can just loosely use them. So, we just want them to call it out when racism happens, when gender discrimination and inequality happens. You need to be brave to call it out. You need to be able to name it and say, "Yes, this is what it is." And then hold people to account, whoever is not doing what they should be doing or whoever is not enough. That means that those people need to be helped to account. Accountability is so important.

Zeynep Ekin Aklar: Thank you very much Şenay. Now we move onto the Q&A session. The floor is yours Jenny.

Jenny Westerstrand: Thank you very much Şenay for your presentation. I would like to ask you a question because I fully support and understand the point of support being sensitive and built on knowledge about the life situation of women and black and minoritized women. What would your comment be on the political level, because in Sweden we have had a very strong division between violence that is supposed to be directed towards minoritized women and what is called, that is interpreted as patriarchal violence if it comes from black man or man from another country, far East, not least. And if it is a white man, sort of a Swedish man, it is like normal or nothing. So how, because the government already in 2006 started to make a very strong division based on claims that knowledge was important. But it turned out to be even more minoritized tragedies. So how do you, how can we sort of work around this issue? Do you have anything wise to say?

Şenay Dur: It is a very similar situation here as well. So, and that is one of the things that stopped because if they go forward with the violence they have been subjected to, unlike white violence... So, with Sarah Everard nobody heard that a white man, white English man killed a woman. Just recently, a teacher, Sabina, was murdered by a minoritized man, an Albanian man. All you hear throughout it is the fact that he is Albanian. So, the tragedy that she has gone through has been gone unnoticed. All the focus is on him being Albanian. That is why we are saying it is very intersectional. I remember from my past experiences, I was working with this black woman, and she went through a horrendous experience, a very terrifying experience, and we said to her... She was a black Caribbean woman. We said to her we have got to report this to the police because it was at the safe-guarding level where children were involved and we had the duty of care to report that.

So, we were trying to explain to her, we wanted her to be on board with us because ultimately, we had to report that to the social services. She was so scared, she was like, "When you report they are not going to see me as a woman who has been subjected to violence, they are going to see me as a black Caribbean woman who has been, whose perpetrator is a black Caribbean man. And they are going to build a whole labelling around black Caribbean man. I have a son, I do not want my son to carry his father's label." And which is the unfortunate thing when it comes to non-white, they are so quick to, kind of, going about that. Then, all we see in... I am one of those people on Facebook when a piece of news from a newspaper is shared, I actually go and read all the comments because I want to understand what a society we live in, and of think and how do they respond to these because it goes beyond London or whatever. It was so horrifying, people found it as a platform to then inflict their racism again. All day cared about was that he was Albanian and some of the Pro-Brexit people were like, "This is why we needed these people out the country. This is why we wanted Brexit. This is why we should have more called for immigrational asylum policies." I just found it horrendous. You know, a young woman, a young teacher, she was murdered but she was Asian and the murderer was Albanian. Because she was Asian, the reason why she became newsworthy was not because it was a young woman who was murdered. It became newsworthy because the perpetrator was from a minoritized background. That gave them the platform to inflict and flare up more racism. That is the usual case. That is the case with the central government. There is not that acknowledgement even when we look at the DA Bill. Yes, we welcome the DA Bill, it is a long due that it should have been there decades ago. But we welcome it, but there are a lot of things missing, that it does not cover a lot of the other cohorts. It is very focused on one group of women in mainstream and it, even with the mainstream, it is not an answer to all their needs, let alone the black minoritized women's needs or acknowledging the disabled women or homosexual women, you know, from the LGBTQI communities. That is all gone unseen. They just focus on one element and only focuses on domestic abuse where it needs to be even an intimate partner or your first degree relative. So, we know in our communities, one of the biggest things is honor-based violence, it is one of the top. It is an honor-based violence, it does not only have your immediate family, like your father and your brother. It goes beyond that, it is a whole community practice, that practice is a societal issue. When you, kind of, confine that into parameters of the mainstream ideology of what domestic abuse is, then that is gone unseen. And it does not, because it is a strand of violence against women and girls, but it is not within domestic abuse. That is why we have twenty-four questions, national risk assessment that all women's organizations use including us but we have a dictional question in us that keeps the additional needs, the intersectional needs our women have. Because that thing only has one question around honor-based violence and there is no way you are

going to capture the impact of honor-based violence can have on a woman with just one in a risk assessment. And especially if you are not trained, if you are not specialised in the context, that is impossible.

Zeynep Ekin Aklar: Thank you. The floor is yours Zeynep.

Zeynep: Being developed, rich, disabled, black, minority, young or vice versa does not prevent us from violence. This is more or less the case all over the world. What are the ways to fight together? We are here together now, as women from Germany, Sweden, England, and Turkey, but it seems that the problem is common, and we need to find ways to unite the struggle. What are your thoughts on this?

Şenay Dur: I agree with Zeynep that this is not something specific to one location. We know that there may be slightly different practices in different countries. In countries like the one we live in, we may be a little more advanced in terms of practices or laws, even it amounts to almost nothing within the framework of democracy. But as I said in my presentation, this is really a universal problem. It is really the only problem that unites all women and all men all over the world. That is, all women regardless of their class, language, religion, and race. Violence does not differentiate between different classes, for example, and we know that wealthy women can also be subjected to very serious violence and they can also have problems with asking for help. But what we mean is that in countries like the one we live in, they should not ignore us, for those extra things. As for Zeynep's question, I absolutely agree. I think this conference is really important in this regard. Yesterday, a lot of experiences were shared by many speakers from different parts of the world. Today we are here from three different countries, four different countries together with Turkey. My approach is that we always talk, but what is the concrete, practical thing that we can take home or to our office? What is practical for us? Something really practical like a joint universal campaign or a simultaneous demonstration can be organized. Yes, we are all here, but this should also have applications, how can we plan our next step from these experiences, from the experiences we share with each other. Or where does this fit into the work we are doing in our own country? For example, we are talking about the Istanbul Convention, unfortunately, Turkey had withdrawn from it very recently and it was not a country that implemented it anyway. But in the international arena, Turkey has withdrawn itself from all kinds of responsibility regarding this issue. The UK is still only a signatory country, and it has not accepted the implementation part of the Istanbul Convention. So, we need an action plan on how we can support each other. There must be something we can do. Especially in recent years, with the works carried out with funds received from certain places, the activist spirit is being killed in the UK. We are now at such a point that this is something that we have talked about

a lot here and that we are slowly starting to revive in the women's work sector. We need to regain that feminist activist spirit. We need to be able to do something about it, we need to be able to do something actively. We are in debt, especially, to the generations that come after us. We also owe this debt to the women who fought those struggles before us. Therefore, maybe we can come up with something concrete here. It could be a joint statement, like a conference declaration or an action plan based on 25th of November. We have an action period of sixteen days and we spread it over one or two weeks. In fact, it is almost spread over the whole of November now. The International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women is now something that should happen every day, but there may be something we can do in terms of international solidarity. But I definitely agree with Zeynep's comment on that issue, our problems are very similar. The problems are intersecting, so the struggle needs to intersect more and we need to be more in touch with each other.

Jenny Westerstrand: At least, I think it is important to see violence, to really shed light on the ways that violence disappears in each context and to sort of acknowledge how it is hard for us to see the violence and hold on to it if it is violence. I think in Sweden we operate with deviance: "He was drunk," "He was sad," "He was not himself," or honor "It was her fault," "She brought it to herself". That is another way of making violence disappear. Young couple in Sweden now, his sexual violence is portrayed as her being perpetrator on her demand since she is such a strong and Swedish and equal woman, she likes him, she fancies to be strangled and almost put to death. We have several cases in court where it sounds like he is almost her servant just acting out a gender-equal way of living, almost killing her. Very Swedish, I would say. So, in each context we have our special ways of making violence disappear. And I think that is a very important way to, sort of, get violence normalized. Always have that in mind and it can be made by focusing on her that she is the wrong kind of woman or on him, he is the wrong kind of man. If you do that in every context, then of course we need a lot of knowledge about different contexts, but I think that is a one way of approaching it and it is to never let violence disappear. Just see it and hold it, keep it as violence and pursue it as violence.

Zeynep Ekin Aklar: Thank you very much Jenny. The floor is yours Seher.

Seher: Hello, I would like to direct my question to Jenny. When we were talking about the shelter for young women, it was said that the age range is not very specific. I took a note that there are young girls who are twelve years and women who are thirty years. I wonder whether girls under the age of eighteen could come voluntarily when they want to benefit from the shelter by their own choice, according to their own needs? In other words, can they come by their own choice or is it the family's decision or legal

processes that come into play? In Turkey, because in such a situation, the Child Protection Law comes into play and many practices are immediately activated and sanctions are imposed against the girl's will. Therefore, I wanted to clarify this issue.

Jenny Westerstrand: Thank you. It is an unclear situation since we are not prone to authorities. I mean if you chat we do not know how old you really are. But if you start to coming to the shelter and if you are going to be a member of it, then, if you are underaged we eventually have to speak to the custodians because we are not allowed to give counselling and so on without parental approval. It is shady because, then again, what is counselling and what is being part of, if you go to a cafe and you sit down and talk to each other, it is not that easy. There are some shadowed lands here but this is also why the young women shelters do not have that much physical contact. Because the issues that arise are so hard when the girls are underaged. So, I would say it is an unclear field, really. That is my best answer.

Zeynep Ekin Aklar: Thank you very much Jenny. I am reading Eylül's question: "The feminist movement and women's studies started to tackle gender inequality in the last century. Today, we see that many groups are rendered disadvantaged by society. Is there any cooperation especially between associations and organizations with other marginalized groups? I am asking this especially for LGBTI+ people. If there is a concrete example of cooperation, I would be very glad to hear about it."

Şenay Dur: I can speak about what we do. We do joint projects widely in London. One of our biggest projects is what we call the London Women's Consortium. For example, even though they are not actual members of the consortium, we work with and invite EFHA, which represents women with hearing impairments, and they attend our meetings. They carry out specialized women's work with the hearing impaired. There is also the LGBT organization we work with. We are in contact with other organizations, but this is the work we do on a project basis, especially when funds are involved. Because, for example, when we look at our numbers, LGBT women do not go to our or women's organizations very much. Therefore, we can carry out a lot of joint work. We can also work together on a case-by-case basis. If there is a LGBT person in the cases that come to us and we need expert information and assistance in this regard. So, we reach to one of those organizations and work with them on that case. We can work in a three-way way, or when we are working on a project basis and with funds, we invite one of those institutions to become a project partner if there is a gap. But unfortunately, there is also the reality that LGBT issues are also universal. Even though London is considered to be a little bit ahead in LGBT issues, there are very few resources provided to this field and therefore, unfortunately, there are very few institutions specialized in this field. Many of them have closed

down or had to merge. The funding they actually receive is very small and they do a lot of work. They often have to work on a national level because even in London they are so few in number, and most of the cities outside London don't have LGBTI specific services. So, there is a very serious burden on them, they have to respond to those problems on a national level. Even in London, where they are based, they have serious resource constraints, and so we try to ensure that they become a part of every project as much as possible. This is a really important point, an important area of expertise. Those women also need to be visible when it comes to providing inclusive services according to the needs of everyone. It is important to work with experts in that field instead of just saying we can do it and jumping in just so we can get that money. This is what we want for black women and minorities. Everyone should not jump in saying we can do it because you may not know the dynamics that govern that field. You may not be able to carry out that work as well as those people who are more experienced in that field. At least this is the case from our point of view. Although it is not very extensive, yes, we carry out works in that field, especially in terms of creating the conditions for working together.

Jenny Westerstrand: We have been working with a special project for the elderly women, at least since the pandemic situation was very hard on them, and also with women in rural areas. It is quite a big project. But Sweden is a forest stretched country and women in the countryside are having special needs as well when they are a victim of violence. We do not work with the LGBTQ organizations. We are women separatists, we have a definition of woman for us to define ourselves. But when it comes to those organizations that are into that area, they have a completely different understanding of prostitution, surrogacy and pornography. So, that is why we do not have collaboration with them. But we certainly work with the issues on trans women, and we do not work that much but we include trans women and welcome them. We have those issues on the agenda. But we are not involved with the organizations.

Ceyda Keskin: The situation in Germany is similar to what Şenay has just explained. So, we are in cooperation with LGBT organizations, and we are actually just starting. We have applied for a new project, and we want to carry out more LGBT+ oriented activities next year. We plan to approach LGBT+ individuals, associations and solidarity organizations in the same way as we approach women with disabilities. We think that the services offered in that field is deficient because our women's counseling centers work mostly for women, but when someone is subjected to violence, the best place to go is actually a women's counseling center. Because they are experts on this subject, they are well-informed about the kind of measures that can be taken against violence and about the ways in which the victim of violence can be empowered. In fact, you are the experts on this issue, for

example, like Mor Çatı or other women's counseling centers. LGBT+ people have such institutions, but maybe very few and that is why we need to work in cooperation. It is necessary to know that they also experience violence and to carry out works to address that violence. We think that it is a must, but we are just starting.

Zeynep Ekin Aklar: Thank you very much Ceyda. I am reading a question posted in the chat box: "Hello, all the presentations were very valuable, thank you very much. I found one sentence by Şenay very striking: "The mechanisms and laws developed against male violence are also made by men." I think this is a key point. The system is already a patriarchal system, so they can never be part of the solution. So, what can we do? Also, if I remember correctly, Liz mentioned yesterday that the common affective ground of feminists around the world is diminishing. We need to spread the word that we need to reawaken this common affective ground, that we need to remind women of each other. Our policy making sometimes gives the impression that we are acting in parallel with the system, and running after each violation of rights. Shouldn't we change and reorganize the way we organize?"

Şenay Dur: Our solidarity, our collective voice and making our feminist voice heard is really important for me. Because we know historically that in every fight we fought to win our rights, unfortunately, we did not get that right just by writing a letter. The rights that were transferred to us were not acquired in this way. We really have to have a common and collective voice. Our friend who asked the question actually answered the question herself. I agree, yesterday's speaker mentioned that we are losing the collective and common feminist voice. As I mentioned, as funds and projects come into play, sometimes especially when you receive funds from local governments, municipalities or departments of the parliament, it automatically restrains you. It automatically affects what and how much you can say. I want to give an example of one of the refugee organizations here, one of the biggest refugee organizations in the UK, that does not accept any state funding. Especially the funds when the Home Office is involved. They have stated that "We only want to be funded by donations and independent funders because the biggest power that stands against us in what we do is the state. The Ministry of Interior. Therefore, from the moment we receive funding from them, the moment we begin to make agreements with them, we actually start speaking within their parameters." Imagine that you are an independent institution, but you have to fight with that department or that place from where you get the money to secure the access of the women to her rights. If it's a housing need, to meet the housing need, or if the woman is in economic hardship, to address her economic difficulty, and so on. Unfortunately, and again this is not a coincidence. Again, this is something that has been systematically developed because the voice of women is very strong and they seriously

plan on how to diminish that voice in every walk of life or how to prevent women's solidarity both at home and in the international arena. And I agree, yes, there is definitely a need for more international solidarity and feminist activism to be coordinated. As I just said, we really need to be in touch with each other. Especially with social media, we have become a little bit comfortable, we are getting carried away. I follow Mor Çatı on Twitter and on Instagram. If there is something they are doing, I can see it from there, for example from England. But it's not like that, that dialogue really needs to be ensured as a network, our information flow with each other should be regular and systematic. We need to think about methods of becoming aware of what do. For example, when Turkey exited the Istanbul Convention, Mor Çatı from Turkey could have written a declaration and sent it to all of us via e-mail. After Turkey's withdrawal, I took the issue to all the platforms I visited here. I was even invited to a panel. But now, in the light of the comments shared here, I wish that I could have shown a sister organization in Turkey that is an expert in this field. Look, such a work is being done, there is such a declaration, and we all need to support this. Otherwise, not only İmece, but also other women's organizations, especially black minority women's organizations, Latin American women's organizations, etc., they also made statements condemning this on their Twitter accounts, for example. That could have been a little more coordinated. I really think we need to be a little more coordinated.

Jenny Westerstrand: I would like to say a few words about this feeling of being together or not. I think that, in Sweden we face a very special way of falling apart, namely our funded up to over the chimney. We have a lot of money. Actually, the field where I am working, our organization is working has... During the last two years we have been given forty million Euros to our organizations and my organization is paying back now one million Euros that we cannot use. It is crazy. It is so much money to "violence" against women. What happens then, there are like forty thousand voices saying "Whatever, it is crazy. It is absolutely crazy." So, those of us, I mean Roks has been existing for forty years. We know what we are talking about, I would say. There are other stakeholders but initiatives are popping up all over the place. Those initiatives, I would say, are carrying a sort of mainstream voice. We talk about people administrating violence instead of opposing it. It feels very cozy, you feel like you are doing something very important, you speak about violence. I watched this quite horrible conference talking about, the title was, "How Can We Address Boys Violence Against Girls". Once it was started, they never spoke about boys again. The people, the young people, the young persons... They like it was sort of a Eurovision, first of all. They were like, "Oh! It is so cosy to be here.", "Oh, sitting in your knee when we talk about this...", "Oh! Did you meet this perpetrator? That is so fascinating!" It was like the entertainment industry. And with all this money... What is happening... I mean the violence just goes on. So, we have

said to the government, "Please, do not kill us by fundings." Because it is very hard to do proper work when everybody is doing the same work and people are sort of... Those reforms. Reform, reform, reform, reform... And we are now very scared about a new reform. We have had several reforms that are just backing everything way too like before the feminist revolution in the 1990s in Sweden. But to make gender the base of hate crime is just to take-away the white men's violence. Whilst the others are going to be very patriarchal, very hateful. We will not accept to divide men's violence against women. There is a common base where you debase the women and the young women that you are violent against. So, it is a mess over here. Everybody is talking about violence and money is just pouring and next year we will have an election. Every fourth male voters in Sweden is pro to the nationalist party. So, the fragmentation is very concrete and we are trying to sort of summon us and formulate a clear way forward. But we also think about saying, "No, thanks" to all this money to be able to be much freer but it is hard to say no to that much money.

Zeynep Ekin Aklar: Thank you very much Jenny. I am reading Pelin's message: "Thank you Mor Çatı and everyone who contributed. Ceyda, Jenny, and Şenay, thank you for your presentations. As an individual activist and as an activist who has been part of an organization from Turkey, I do not think think so negatively. We have been on social media as independent feminists or feminists who work with funds since the Istanbul Convention was annulled overnight. On the 25th of November, we will be in the squares of Istanbul. We should organize this together internationally and I propose a meeting for this". Evrim also has a message: "Maybe we should not feel uncomfortable receiving funding. If one percent of the world's capital is owned by women, we should see it as if the patriarchy, which owns the capital, is paying us back." Thank you very much to everyone.



WORKSHOP 2:
STRUGGLE
MECHANISMS OF
SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Ebrar Nefes: Hello everyone, my name is Ebrar and I am a Mor Çatı volunteer. We are here for the Struggle Mechanisms of Sexual Violence Workshop on the second day of our Feminist Approaches to Social Work in the Struggle Against Male Violence—World Experiences Conference. Today, we have with us two valuable speakers. First, we will listen to them and then we will do a Q&A session with our participants. Our first speaker is Enikő Pap. Enikő Pap is a legal expert at NANE Women's Rights Association in Hungary. Her expertise is on the role of state in the application of international norms pertaining to women's rights—especially the norms effective in the elimination of violence against women. Enikő Pap has participated in numerous national and international programmes and partook in various initiatives in the field. She was an editor, co-editor, co-author, and expert contributor of several related national and international publications. As an example, she has taken an active role in the preparation of NGO submissions in the UN CEDAW and UPR reporting processes. Enikő, welcome again.

Enikő Pap: Thank you very much. First of all, thank you very much for inviting me to this workshop. It is a real pleasure for me to be here with all of you. I am working for NANE, Women's Rights Association. NANE Association operates in Hungary and actually it is one of the oldest feminist NGOs in the country aiming to end the violence against women and children. NANE was established in 1994; so now, we have nearly thirty years of experience. We are operating on different levels of the society. On the individual level, we have a help-line. Also, we are organizing support groups. On the community level, we are organizing different events and trainings for professionals like social workers, and officers. At the national level, we also organize awareness raising campaigns, like the organization of 16 Days of Activism campaign in Hungary. We are also active in advocacy, legal and policy monitoring, and recommendation in national norms. We are issuing different publications for different target groups. As for the international level, we are a member of the WAVE network. We have also participated in different international projects as well. So I will begin with telling you briefly about the situation in Hungary regarding the response against the violence, especially sexual violence. We are sharing the same struggles with you, and actually the Hungarian government has blocked and refuses the ratification of the Istanbul Convention in Hungary. So, with the current government, we do not have any chance for the convention to be ratified. On the other hand, we lack the national policy and strategy for addressing violence against women in general, including sexual violence. In legal terms, the definition of rape is still based on the use of force and not lack of consent. Even in the legislation, there is a reference to sexual morale. So, there is not a full reference to the integrity of the victims. This is a big issue because no specific or proper training for any kind of professionals, I must say, is provided in the issue of sexual violence. There is no organised service at all for the victims of sexual violence. For example, we do not have any rape

crisis centre or sexual referral centre. There have been in the past very few and very small-scale NGO initiatives. The current ones are mostly targeting children. For the societal climate, I am just recalling one survey. It was a Eurobarometer's survey which was done a few years ago, and based on the survey it was revealed that close to the half of the population thinks that sexual activities without consent is acceptable in certain cases like if your clothes kind of allow. We are operating in this climate, just to show you the basic features of the state responses and all the societal attitudes we are working on. So, in this context, since we are in contact with the victims through different angles, the need for supporting, especially the victims of sexual violence, was revealed by several channels. The NANE Association helpline got calls which express the need for such kind of services. Also, we seeking help through e-mails when this need appears. It is also important that we have a support group which has a longer herstory now. It is called "Power to Change". It is a support group for victims/survivors of domestic violence specifically. The applications for these support groups also reveal the need for supporting sexual violence victims. So these were the channels when we have the voices of victims that there could be good to have such kind of services for sexual violence. The support group is for women victims of child/youth sexual abuse committed by a person who is in a close relationship or in a position of trust with the victims. For the methodology itself, it is not an adaptation. So it is kind of own development of NANE Association. One of the bases of the working of the methodology was the support group for the domestic violence survivors I mentioned to you before. It is called "Power to Change" methodology which was actually worked out in an international collaboration in the framework of the WAVE network. So maybe there are English materials in them. We also have some examples of foreign anonymous groups for incest survivors and also anonymous incest group without facilitation. We also have professional literature in hands which all of these gave the bases of the methodology for the support groups I am talking about to you now. For example, Judith Herman's book *Trauma and Healing* and also Susan Forward's *Toxic Parent, The Courage to Heal* by Ellen Bass and Laura Davis and also from Laura Davis *The Courage to Heal Workbook*. These are the main sources we have used. The *Survivor to Thrive Manual* and *Power to Change handbook* for the victims of domestic violence are also the ones I was mentioning before. So, what are the main aims of the group for survivors and what are the the main considerations? Among the aims, it was important to decrease the feelings of shame, to decrease isolation of the victims, to establish supporting relationships. Both for the decreasing isolation and establishing supporting relationships to have the feeling that "I am not alone." One of the very important aim was to share their stories and to break the silence in a safe place. Also it gives you the wider context to overwrite the harmful messages. Harmful messages can come from different sources, different persons like the perpetrator and the society itself like the professionals or the practitioners who use the

victim-blaming attitudes. So, overwriting those harmful messages which the victims often get and face was very important to the aim of the programme. For the considerations, both the internal and external safety of the victims/survivors were really the key consideration. For overwriting harmful messages it is very important that the facilitators keeping the feminist framing of all the stories and the problems. So they put the cases into societal context, they reflect the victim-blaming, self-blaming and the excuses towards the perpetrators. Through these angles and through this framing, they are bringing up the women's human rights perspective, feminist perspective for the process through the support group. So, the group itself is a thematic one, there are pre-defined themes, there is a methodology which was developed. The group has thirteen occasions and there is one follow up session afterwards, after the process. So, what are the main themes these sessions and occasions address? First and foremost there are two sessions which are describing or talking about safety, safety means both in the group so to establish the climate then they can safely interact in a supportive environment. But safety also means safety in the external world. So we are working with stories with those angles of safety. You can see, I will not go into the details of the different topics of the different sessions. But as you could see, we are dealing with the symptoms and then there is a sharing of the stories in the group itself, so in the group climate. We are also dealing with the effects of trauma, the PTSD; we are addressing the feelings, we are addressing the body and the relationship of victim/survivors with the body. There is a strong emphasis on working around the shame, also the sexuality. The potentials, opportunities but also the dangers of sharing the story with others not in the group but in the external environment for others. There is also the self-expression which can get attention, and also the relationship meaning that what kind of relationship that were in the past survivors. So whom they could turn to and they could not get proper assistance, for example, by the family, by the networks; who they could turn to and they could rely on in the present. So we have the kind of relationship maps for example, both for the past and for the present to work with. We are also discussing the way forward. In a nutshell, this is how the methodology looks like and then how the process is building up. How is the selection of participants done? Mostly the advertisements through our Facebook page, and then NANE has a newsletter. So, these were the two channels we use for seeking applicants for the programme. For the selection criteria and selection factors the first and the most important one is to map the internal and the external safety of victims. It is one of the main considerations whether they are safe, whether there is a, for example, better around. So, all these factors which are related to safety are mapped during the selection process. It is also important to map the existent support network of the survivors. So, when they are involved in the process, is there anybody in their surroundings they could turn to because the group is one thing but when you are alone and there are no group sessions it is important

that you have a supporting network around you that you can turn to. It was also an important point of consideration to map potential connections with other group participants meaning that we pay attention to having women with similar stories, similar situations in one group in order to make connections more easier. There are some conclusions we could write down. So far, actually we started the group in 2018, so, there is not a big “herstory” of the group yet. But we already organized four sessions so we have some experience on that. One of the main conclusions is that there was and there is a great need on the side of survivors for such kind of connection, for such kind of safe places and connection to other survivors with similar stories. It was also a lesson learnt that the balancing is needed between going deeply into cases and the safety of the participants. So, since it is not a therapy, combination of kind of going ins and also addressing very practical issues was good to follow. It is also important to keep in mind as well as reflect on previous bad experiences. What I mean by that, in many cases, victims are either not having help at all or not getting proper help. What is actually happening after the violence and after the violence episodes has a very strong effect on the victims’ positions and the status. So, it is very important to keep this in mind as well and to work with previous bad experiences of the survivors. Which is kind of in addition, aggravation to the violence episode itself. It was also a conclusion that it is important or it should be important to have other, individual forms of support available which in Hungary, there is a great need of especially for proper support and assistance. I have brought some of the feedback from participants for you. These are as follows: “In the group, I got to know myself better and my behavior in certain situations gained meaning. I can accept myself better.” / “I realized that my feelings are legitimate; what happened can be expressed and processed.” / “It was good to get acquainted with the stories of others, to recognize that similar things have been blocked in ourselves. I felt that I am not alone.” / “My body is mine!” / “It is not my responsibility for what has been done to me!”

I am ending my presentation with the final world of victims and survivors. Thank you very much for your attention.

Ebrar Nefes: Thanks a lot Enikő for your presentation. You talked about the individual and group support received by women who are subjected to sexual violence. When we are subjected to violence of any kind, we may feel various emotions; sometimes we may think that it is our fault. Male violence is already capable of making us feel this way. We also listened to the impacts of the group work. It was very valuable to listen to this experience in Hungary. Now we can move on to our next speaker, we will listen to Cliona Saidlear. Dr. Cliona Saidlear is a national policy expert on sexual violence and is the executive director of the Rape Crisis Network Ireland, which runs rape crisis centers, represents the interests of sexual

violence survivors, and offers expertise on prevention. Cliona has spent 17 years specializing on all forms of sexual violence and actively participating in the related policymaking work. She regularly engages with sexual violence survivors, works with services provided, professionals, organizations as well as the government on the prevention of sexual violence and its effects on survivors. Hello again, Cliona. The floor is yours.

Cliona Saidlear: Thank you very much. It is great to come after Enikő because a lot of what she spoke about is exactly the principles that we have them right in process in Ireland. Judith Butler is also the foundational piece in terms of trauma for us and we build all our work on that. In terms of the principles of the groups, Enikő described both in the terms mentioned the survivors in terms of their needs but also really crucially maintaining the feminist focus and what that means and why we have that. That is exactly the same in Ireland in everything we do. We do not do so many groups, we have done groups on and off and we still have some groups across the sector. But we tend to focus more on one-on-one and counseling as Enikő was saying the need for those groups have also that support somewhere. We are similar like that when working in groups, we find the same things. The safety in groups, this is one of the key questions in terms of how you are handling vicarious trauma and re-traumatization that happens.

I have a different title here than the one that I sent you. The title I sent was “Building Services that Survivors Want or Need”. Because I think a lot of what we end up doing is what we are seeing is a lot of services that survivors do not use and then survivors get blamed for not being the right kind of survivors in terms of taking up services. Some take mostly in terms of the criminal justice system but it also happens in terms of the type of response services we put in place. When we take seriously that mantra and that principle of survivor led and survivor centered, it is at the end of the day, the gracious test of any of our services is that survivors use them. And just they do not. Then they are speaking to us and we need to pay attention. Back in 2012, I hosted and chaired an international multi-disciplinary conference on sexual violence in Ireland. People came from everywhere and it was a lot of people from different professions. But I began to notice there was something strange happening in the room and in the conversation. And that was, we were all having these different conversations not really noticing we were having different conversations, not understanding, that we were not in fact in the same conversations with the people who we are talking to. I really began, really thinking about “OK. How do we find common language, common set-up definitions so that when we speak about sexual violence, when we speak about sexual violence trauma and type of services and responses we put in place. Do we mean the same thing? Because if we do not, we cannot build solidarity. I think that it is very important that we have solidarity across the whole of Europe all the way through. So, I am

talking from Western edge of Europe here, it is a whole different picture over here. You know we are more than familiar with Istanbul Convention Article 25 and what Istanbul Convention does, it names two types of services. It names Rape Crisis Centers and it names Sexual Violence Referral Centers (SVRC). The naming of those two pieces, I think, is one of the pieces that we really need to get clear. Because I think we have different models that how developed across Europe and the world. We need to understand them because there is some confusion, I think that confusion is also unhelpful. I very crudely draw lines on this map. And I say very crudely that the lines are evidence based, they are really about my experiences of what I think it looks like in terms of the different models we have across Europe at least. One of the reasons I think I was asked to talk of it because over in Ireland we have quite well-developed rape crisis model, it is the same sort of model that they have in the U.K. It is also the same model that has developed in North America, Canada, the US and also in New Zealand, Australia. So essentially, the English-speaking world has this model. When I look at my counterparts and sister organizations in different countries across Europe, there is something different going on. In the Northern European model, it has been around as long as maybe longer than the Irish model but it was built differently and I have heard some people speaking from there and of course Southern Europe and the culture in those countries is very different as well. Particularly the culture, in terms of patriarchy, is different. Southern Europe of course has different experiences, and that line to the East, I think the experience both in terms of the development of the state and state's relationships with SVRC and the base for women's organizing and community-based services have a very different history. And therefore, we are in very different places now. But one of the distinctions about the Irish model is that we have Rape Crisis Centers and we also have Sexual Violence Referral Centers. One of the questions I asked often in terms of Rape Crisis Centers and Sexual Violence Referral Centers is which one is best. For us in Ireland the answer is not an either or question, it is both. You have to have both because they are doing very different things. So, what concerns me sometimes when I hear particularly from state's parties where these two get confused and I see something happen there, that is not necessarily going to meet the needs of survivors because it is moving towards the state providing a checklist, things that need delivering but actually are not necessarily what survivors are asking for. I think one of the things that I thought is useful in terms of outlining, is what we see in Ireland in terms of our models and the distinction between these two, it may translate differently in the EU. But in terms of the history, I really acknowledge we are in a very different place in Ireland, but I just thought it is helpful just to outline the different functions, the different people, the different professionals that are involved in these different cases. It helps to clarify what they do that is so different. In the Rape Crisis Centre, we might do accompaniment, and by accompaniment, I mean to the police, the courts, but also to the SVRC. We provide

accompaniment to the SVRC. So, we are partners with the SVRC but we are not a SVRC. We also provide helpline support, specialist counseling, advocacy, education and awareness and we really try to hold that piece where we are engaging in activism and political change in looking to transform and prevent. SVRCs are providing medical care, forensic care, storage for evidence for the criminal justice system. They also provide advocacy support, and they will be doing follow up medical care. As I say Rape Crisis Centre will provide accompaniment into an SVRC which will provide the immediate psychological support needed there also. So that begins to clarify for us who uses these services and when. If I first look at the Rape Crisis Centre side, it is for all survivors. What I mean by that is, there are people who come directly from an SVRC, a week later maybe from an SVRC for the sexual violence happens last week, and there are people who come thirty or forty years later. We just released our national statistics there last week and the average age for somebody who was sexually abused is under the age of 13, the average time that takes them to come to Rape Crisis Centers is thirty-three years. So, there can be a quite distance between the incident and them coming to a Rape Crisis Center. We also see supporters because they very much recognize that survivors may not want to or be able to or ready to come to a Rape Crisis Center, but they are seeking support from those around them and those around them, we can support them. Therefore, we can reach the survivor through supporters. We also support the professionals in our communities, those who are encountering and working with. So, you might, for example GPs or the police officers locally who will be engaging with the survivors and they often come to us with questions looking for support when something has come in the door to them. We work with educators. We also do that in schools. We work with government local and national, police officers and child protection services also. So, we are engaging cross-board with two different things. One is, we are meeting the needs of the survivors and we are looking at supporting them, making the response throughout the whole community better. We are also looking out for prevention. These two things we are doing there. Within the SVRC, people who use them are the survivors of recent sexual assaults. In an SVRC, in Ireland at least, there is a window of maybe maximum a week since the incident. Because what you are looking at there is immediate medical attention. You are also looking at gathering forensic evidence. A week is almost too long, four or five days really set the outside limit of it when you can still gather forensic evidence. So, it really is for someone immediately after an assault. Very much it serves the justice system as well as the survivor. There is a tension there of course, between serving the needs of survivors and the needs of the justice system. You will have the police force, they are going to be there in present in order to make sure that the evidence that is gathered can be effectively used in our criminal justice system. So, there is a formal process making sure that the evidence remains usable and has value in the court case. It is focused very formally on that aspect of it.

In the SVRC, as I have just been saying, you have doctors, you have nurses, you have psychologists probably, and not necessarily. The RCC volunteers will be providing psychological support and you have police officers and independent survivor advocates as well. Whereas in Rape Crisis Centre, you will have specialist sexual violence trauma counsellors and I would add that here we generally talking about feminist sexual violence counsellors. We have advocates, feminists, volunteers, educators, activists and community development workers. So, you can see that they are a very different type of community of people who are both using these services and delivering from these services and be in these services if you like. Generally, well I suppose in the SVRCs, and I think this is one of the things that I see happening in some of the countries that are seeking to be compliant with the Istanbul Convention, the state is moving towards what I would call and sometimes it is called the medicalized model which is the SVRC model. Where you have set-up centers and hospitals. These are necessary, in Ireland we have both and they are important. But, they are no substitutes for Rape Crisis Centers and they are not the same thing as the Rape Crisis Centre. I often see this confusion across. Oftentimes, the SVRC is draught from existing public funding, so hospital and medical care are already provided through the public price. It simply becomes a part of that. Whereas the Rape Crisis Centre, certainly in Ireland, you will have different models across Europe. NGOs and CSOs are funded and run but you know, there is very much more, that there are grants from governments and there is also fundraising. There is an element where Rape Crisis Centre is very much seeking to remain independent of the state and that is an important aspect of the feminist delivery of response to the survivors and on what they want.

I was working through definitions for the WAVE. Because one of the things that WAVE is trying to do is define the shared language around how we define sexual violence responses and rape crisis responses and how we measure, account for them in a way that would allow us to have solidarity with each other. So in Ireland, just to give you a little bit of history about where Ireland is. I am moving back to the 1970s, I benefit today from a very well-established sector. You know, it is moved from the activists, the entrepreneurs and feminists back then. What we have today in Ireland, and there is a lot of work happening on that, developing even further is national planning, state funding of Rape Crisis Services as well as SVRCs where we were working towards national best practices and where we were working towards prevention and partnership, state agencies. So, it has been a long journey. This is where we are now. This is Ireland and these purple dots are the Rape Crisis Centres. Now we are only a population of five million people in Ireland and we have sixteen Rape Crisis Center. These are all still independent and community based and owned by their communities. They are state-funded though, by enlarged the state funds us, but we remain independent. We are providing all the services that I have spoken about

before. We see approximately three thousand clients, we sometime use the word client, we sometime use the word survivors depending on talking to the funder, and the survivor themselves. We have face to face clients, but I mean in terms of helpline contacts we might have forty thousand, forty-five thousand nationally in every year.

There are less SVRCs than Rape Crisis Center, but of course one of the challenges of the SVRCs is to have medical personnel available with the proper skills in order to have a road out. In a small country, and in a small population it is difficult to have a sufficient number of medical practitioners who are skilled in this in order to run that center, and will be able to provide medical care and gather forensic evidence that is usable in a criminal justice system. So, the geographic spread is less. Occasionally you might have to travel to some distances in some hours, within the geography of Ireland depending where you are traveling from, unfortunately. But it is a logistical issue if you like.

We have approximately 45,000 helpline calls in Ireland, I need to remind you our population is only five million. We know that still not everyone. It is still in my notes who come forward to us. There is about a thousand people going to the SVRCs. So again, the people who come to Rape Crisis Centers, they could have been abused in any point of their lifetime whereas people who are going to SVRCs, it happened right now, it happened this week. About 3,307 recorded crimes of the people had gone to the police. Of that 3,307 person there is about a 12% detection rate they got in the police course. There is about a hundred cases prosecuted in our Central Criminal Court, and that is for the most serious forms of rapes, attempted rapes, aggravated sexual assault and trafficking. There is a further 300 sexual offences prosecuted in the Circuit Courts. So, we have the most serious court to take the most serious offenses and we have the other offences are taken to the lower courts. That is basically what Ireland looks like in the numbers.

I just hope that it gives you sort of a comparison in terms of how this makes sense and how it speaks to your own situation and what you are lacking locally. I put this in here because one of the tensions that we continually have in Rape Crisis Center, as we deliver exactly as Enikő said, the type of how it formed and survivor-led services. We have to maintain our organizations, it is always a struggle even though we have been around since 1970, and we have, if you like won the battle that the state funds us and the state, as a matter of duty to survivors, must fund us. We are still in the argument all the time. You also still need to own an organization. We also need to do the whole piece of work. There is response to survivors, that is the crisis piece within the title Rape Crisis Center. We also need to keep prevention. We keep this pie chart what we say that three different services, there if you like a third each. Because oftentimes what we end up doing is we end up

doing the response, the service. The survivor takes over and the organization collapses or we maintain the organization and the service to survivors but we lose our way in terms of prevention. I think we keep reminding ourselves because prevention is the long game and responses are how we can meet people's needs right now. But actually as a feminist movement, we keep reminding ourselves that the ethical in providing services for survivors, we need to make sure that their voices and their stories inform us in terms of prevention into the future. So, it is a real battle we keep reminding ourselves because it is a battle to maintain this balance of services. In our services, that is about the longevity, because we know that to prevent sexual violence, we need to be here for the long game.

What are the core principles that will keep us from risk. The risk for the work we do is that we end up moving away from being survivor-centered, and we end up doing what gets us the funding, and we end up, if you like, not being effectively feminist in our work. So, what are the principles that keep us being feminist, and being change-makers and challenging to the conditions that continue to facilitate sexual violence, and victim blaming, and silence? The first one really is being survivor-centered, and that is that piece, you know, we see it over and over again how we build services and survivors do not use them. That dynamic, we then blame survivors because there is something wrong with the survivors for not using the service. That is the wrong model. That is the wrong approach to it. We also argue back to the state, that thing that we bring, the most important thing that we bring as CSOs, as NGOs, as independent from the state is that we are trusted. We earn trust, and we earn that trust through treating survivors with dignity and by respecting their autonomy, by respecting their choices and by essentially making access, you know, we make ourselves accessible and we examine ourselves if survivors do not use our services. But I have this picture here, this building does actually stand there but there is actually no windows and doors on it. I often think, sometimes we build that type of thing where everything is beautiful and everything ticks all the boxes but if there are no windows or doors then the survivors cannot get in. And we have failed. So, I come back to that piece, our currency is trust and oftentimes what the state lacks in terms of meeting its obligations is that survivors for all reasons that you can think of and do not necessarily trust the state or the state agents in terms of, obviously, national formal agents. Because they have failed, because the state is part of the system. We are not, and we have access to survivors and survivors have access to us. We can, then, work in partnership as long as it is a respectful partnership with the state in order for the state to meet its obligations.

Everyone says the word trauma-informed these days and I often pause and wonder "Do we mean the same thing by that when we say it?" What we mean by that? I think Enikő has outlined the principles very well already

and this is a bit more wordy but it is the same thing essentially. So, what it really is about is meeting survivors where they are at, minimizing and re-traumatization, looking at how we provide safety, looking at how we allow survivors to lead us other than to demand everything of survivors. Because one of the things that we are reminded of continually is that every single intervention that we have, every single response and every single support structure that we have for survivors essentially makes a demand for them. No matter how well-meaning, no matter how well-built, everything requires a survivor to come forward, to speak, to tell us their story, to be present. All of those things are demanded of survivors. We have to be very careful that we are not adding to the trauma and that we are essentially moving with the survivor where they are in their trauma, providing the safety all around them on that.

I was talking about the distinction between Rape Crisis Center and SVRC. Prevention is the same and we talk a lot now about primary and secondary prevention. They are utterly different things. If we think of prevention as a one thing, we are probably going to fail. We may end up with some really bad results that we did not intend if we do not make the distinction between primary and secondary. We have already known and I have done this framing for yourselves, but I think it bears repeating because it is something I come across again that we have not done this separation between primary and secondary prevention. So again, in the same way I did for RCCs and SVRCs, talking about what sort of tools we are using, who we are talking to and those sorts of questions allow us to really clarify the distinction between primary and secondary. All primary, you know, so the first column here is what it is. The primary prevention is preventing sexual violence from happening in the first place. On this, if we are successful here, there will be no survivors. Secondary prevention is where we have survivors because we have failed in primary prevention. Now we are trying to ensure that preventing secondary trauma, which is what I was talking early about trauma-informed approach, access to services, aftercare, appropriate criminal justice responses. These are all part of the secondary prevention piece. Really the key focus on secondary prevention is to not re-traumatize as we go. If you go to second column here, "Who do we talk to?", in primary prevention we are talking to the whole of society, we are talking to bystanders, we are talking to perpetrators, we are talking about our culture. In secondary prevention of course, we are talking, we are reaching out to the victims and survivors. We are driven by survivor needs, we have a survivor lens and we have a cultural and societal response around supporting survivors. One of the troubling pieces that when we do not distinguish these two is that we often think that in primary prevention, we must center the survivors. What happens if you center the survivors in primary prevention is that you are essentially saying to a survivor "Something was done to you, someone else did something to you. We want you to tell us how to stop sexual violence." What we are

essentially saying there is that survivors are the problem, that survivors somehow caused the sexual violence and survivors are essentially to be blame, therefore, they have the solution. Obviously, no one here wants to do that. So, we have to be really clear that while we absolutely center survivors in secondary prevention, it is really inappropriate to center them in primary prevention because they are never the problem. So, they cannot be the solution. They certainly have wisdom to give us in it, but they are not central to what happened to them, what someone else chose to do to them. So, that is why, you know that, I suppose I labor to differentiate between primary and secondary because there is such a risk of essentially repeating the victim blaming cycle if we do not distinguish between these two.

There is a Department of Justice because in Ireland at the moment, they are the department that has the responsibility to coordinate the state's responses. So, they hold the national strategy at the moment and they are going to develop a new national strategy. They also have been running national campaigns, this is something new that happened for us in the last two or three years where the government is running a national public campaign against sexual violence. They also have done a thorough review and were in a process of review just running in parallel with our Istanbul Convention compliance which is transforming and changing all aspects of the victim's journey through the criminal justice system. Rape Crisis Sources, this is some of the material that RCNI for example produces. We produce statistics from Rape Crisis Centers and for us this is really critical because this is where we in the community sector have the voice of and have the trust of survivors in a way that nobody else does. We bring their story in a way that is anonymous and safe to the policy table, to the department justice, to the ministers. This is what survivors are telling us. They are not going to come to you, they are not going to tell you not to go to the guards, not no more. But we are telling you the truth here, in terms of their experiences right now and what they are telling us. We also work with the services in terms of looking at best practices on how we can support the sixteen Rape Crisis Centers across Ireland in terms of best practice. But also, all the allied professionals and community actors. The third piece of resources is our health responses. So, the health response, I had justice in there, but the health response is also, health response is largely and they have response ability for the SVRCs. We call them SATUs. It is the same thing with an SVRC. So, you will find these links here, if you link to the standard for SVRCs, the guidance and the statistics from SVRCs as well as the training courses for the medical nurses and practitioners who are part of the SVRCs. So, thank you very much.

Ebrar Nefes: Thank you very much Cliona. We had the chance to hear about different centers working on sexual violence – both Rape Crisis Centers and Sexual Violence Referral Centers. I think it was especially enlightening

to us since we have no such specialized centers in Turkey yet. Focusing on women survivors of sexual violence was actually very informative. We continue with the Q&A.

Perihan Meşeli: Hello, I am a volunteer lawyer at Mor Çatı Women's Shelter Foundation. I have two questions. My first question is for Cliona, and I think the second can be answered by both speakers. One of the articles for which I felt sorry the most after Turkey pulled out of the Istanbul Convention is the one covering Rape Crisis Centers. The Istanbul Convention was in force for a long time, but Turkey did not take any action on this matter. In Turkey, when a woman is raped, she has to testify to the police station, prosecutor, judge, lawyer, forensics institution – all of them separately. Therefore, secondary traumas are very common among rape survivors. That's why I am wondering, in your system, is the first person to interview a rape survivor a social worker or a specialist such as a psychologist or psychiatrist? Then, after the interview with her, can the police come to the same center and take her statement? And is this statement recorded and is the woman never heard before the courts again? Is this really how it works? My second question is about the sexual health dimension. It is possible for a woman subjected to sexual violence to become infected with STIs. Is there any medication in Ireland or in Hungary that can be taken within the first forty-eight hours after an unprotected sexual intercourse or after being subjected to sexual violence?

Cliona Saidlear: One of the things that we continually fight for that the survivors get to choose, they get to choose the right path, and how they engage and who they engage with. So, somewhere a woman has just been raped, they may go to the police. And the police then, activate the SVRC team. The SVRC team is three elements, it is the police themselves, it is the medical team, medical and nursing team and it is the Rape Crisis volunteer. All three, if you like, pillars come to that shared space to support that survivor if she chooses to get the forensic medical. And to your second question, the priority here is the medical. So, the first thing is the safety and well-being of the women, so absolutely STIs will be treated and any preventing medications are given in that point if she is in there soon enough. But to go back to the first question, one of the things we have had to fight for is that the, when someone goes to SVRC, they can go there without going to the police. So, they can self-refer directly to the SVRC or through the Rape Crisis Center into the SVRC. They can choose not to make a statement to the police. We have storage of evidence for six months. So, that evidence, if they consent to that evidence being given, that evidence can be stored. And they have up to six months to decide whether or not they will engage with the criminal justice system and make a statement to the police. So, what we are trying to fight for is that they have pathways, and they have choices and they are in control of those choices. For a Rape Crisis Center, they can self-refer

or people might refer them in. But they can come through our front doors and they do not need to go to the police or anyone else, they do not need to be on any official records and to come to us, for the support we provide. Does that answer your question?

Perihan Meşeli: Yes, it actually does. I am just curious about this: for instance, when a woman, who has been raped the day before, goes to the SVRC today, who is the first person of contact for her? Is it the police or an expert? Because in Turkey, they go to the police station, but the approach of the police is very poor in this regard. Maybe the police officers at the center are trained or they have developed a woman-friendly perspective. Who is the first person interviewing the rape survivor and also, if the woman decides to file a complaint, can she handle everything at the center without going to the police station?

Cliona Saidlear: Yes. The idea in the SVRC and in Ireland is the wrap-around service. Everything is there, the medical, the psychological, and the forensic. It is all happening there. There is a very detailed protocol between the different professionals to make sure that the survivor remains central in that. One of the links in my slide was the link to the protocol in SVRC. Yes, the police, you know the state and the police have an interest in all of the cases coming to them, they want the cases, because they need more cases into the system. They need to be able to increase their prosecution rate. They have a conflict of interest in allowing the survivor to make a choice. So, this is why we are very careful around the protocols and the different professionals in there to make sure that the survivor continues to be in control. And that actually, the police do not dictate it and the police are not the gatekeepers into those services. And that the women are entitled to the services whether or not they have engaged with the police. It is a very important principle because you know that recognition of the police wants, you know that the police. I mean in one point they said they wanted to come and they wanted to set up a desk within a Rape Crisis Centre to speak to all the women who came into Rape Crisis Centre to try to persuade them to go to the police. And we were like, "No, it does not work for us."

Enikő Pap: I would like to reiterate that in the case of Hungary we do not have any single Rape Crisis Center or Sexual Violence Referral Center. So, I think the response to sexual violence is lagging behind of any kind of international standard. What is available is only the pilot project or initiatives of women's rights NGOs with our limited capacity. I believe that you can in Turkey connect to that situation. Having the medical angle of the story, I also had to say that for violence against women or domestic violence because we have greater experience in domestic violence... So, the medical professional is really ignoring the proper response to the violence. There is also a need or a regress from the society that medical persons should

react properly. So, in this sense police, for example, is much better both by having protocols, having kind of specific training although there is a room for improvement but health sector is really lagging behind of any kind of response to violence against women. So, it is true for sexual violence as well. As for the emergency contraception, for example, you referred to, generally speaking, I only had to know that Hungary is among the few EU countries that still require a prescription for emergency contraception. In the practice, women report increasingly complicated access to prescription. Also, there is a hardship to pay the high price of the pill. In this general context, you can imagine what kind of availability the sexual violence survivors is having.

Ebrar Nefes: Thanks a lot for your answers. After the experience of sexual violence, both the police response and the interventions by the healthcare sector are actually very important in order to prevent the secondary trauma that Cliona mentioned. We also need expertise or improvements here. As Perihan said, unfortunately, the approaches of both the experts, meaning the police or the judicial officers, may not be very amicable. Merve, I think you have a question.

Merve: I noticed the difference between Hungary and Ireland in terms of the extend of support groups. I realized that Hungary is similar to Turkey in some ways, whereas in Ireland, the support systems that a survivor can access are much broader and more extensive. Given these circumstances, it is possible to say that these support systems attract more attention or emphasis in Hungary because women are compelled to find support from each other? In Turkey, too, support systems are very common where survivors are trying to form their own support systems without any state support or financial support, maybe with the exception of Anonymous Alcoholics and groups for substance abuse. There are some survivors working for this purpose. There have been communities that have asked for resources and that we have provided them with some examples of resource generation methods and some practices from different countries. In the absence of these support systems, for example in Hungary, do women look for solidarity in each other? My question is about how useful this has been. Thank you very much.

Cliona Saidleair: For me this is a really interesting question because for me it talks to the last ten years of experience we have had. So, one of the reasons, one of the things that of course has happened is the MeToo movement. Obviously, that has a different flavor in different countries and obviously social media and the engagement across social media happened. So, in terms of survivors both breaking the silence and having solidarity with the others and finding each other in having solidarity. There was a point about that ten years ago, maybe less than that, where we said, you know, we actually as organizations, we need to step back because survivors have their own voice and they have their own platform, their own way of finding

their solidarity with each other actually. So, there are survivors' groups all over Ireland who are doing solidarity work. But many of them will then be coming to us for their one-to-one support. I suppose a more specialized space where they can explore that. You know it is not our place to stand in the way of the survivors' empowerment. We stand beside them and empower them. Within this context of social media, survivors can do that solidarity work with each other. So, in many ways, moving in and out of group work is a little bit of trying to figure out where to stand in beside the survivors, what does that look like today? How do we support them without standing in front of them? I think it is an alive question for us, we keep reflecting on it and coming back to it. But I think that a part of what is going on for us is that the culture is getting safer for survivors to speak publicly, with their names, not anonymous, and to organize publicly in that way, and to advocate for themselves. So, we try not to stand in their way.

Enikő Pap: Thank you very much Merve for your questions. It is kind of not an easy one. So, from one hand, as you and Perihan said, we are sharing many similarities, I mean the two countries and the two women's movements so to say. Sexual violence victims are really, completely underserved in Hungary. So, from that point it is very important to have at least with our sources to afford some kind of place to share and also facilitation. Because still, it is a very taboo issue in Hungary. So that is very important at least to send a message, for example, for the survivors that there is a place they could share. Also for the state that they have a responsibility to act properly. The big question mark for me especially comes when, for example, there are women's rights NGOs who, so to say, are not so very welcomed by the state actors. From one day to another, the state try to do something about this issue but do not necessarily hear the voice of the survivors or women's rights NGOs, will it be fine at the end of the day for survivors? So, for me this is a big question mark. Of course, we need to demand and we need to have such kinds of services. But also, kind of, we need to be cautious when there is no place for the women's rights, for the feminist approach to get into the process that might pose any danger. Just to tell you an example, similar things happened in Hungary in the case of domestic violence. We do have several crises centers now, for example, crisis ambulances. But they are very careful not to follow a feminist perspective, a women's rights perspective. Rather, a gender-neutral or I would say gender-blind one. So, my caution is turning around that. On one hand, we need to demand such kinds of services both in Turkey and in Hungary. On the other hand, we need to be kind of strategic when there is an openness, then what will happen and what kind of services the state will provide if we are not in the picture, I mean professionally and by our approach of feminism and women's human rights. So, these were my first thoughts, I do not know whether I have responded to your questions. But I am still here so, if there are any more that I am happy to contribute.

Ebrar Nefes: Thanks a lot for your answers. Canan has a question.

Canan Arin: I have a comment and a question. Many years ago, when I was working at the Istanbul Bar Association Women's Right Application Center, we organized a meeting on my initiative, it was called something like Comparative Law's Approach to Sexual Crimes. We invited people we know, our friends like Enikő from the Council of Europe. Also, a woman chief of police or supervisor had come from Ireland. In her presentation, there were some interesting remarks, especially in terms of collecting evidence on sexual crimes. They said that in Ireland, they sent the accused and the survivor of sexual crimes in separate ambulances so that the evidence would not be mixed. Of course, this is a dream for Turkey. Because here, there is a growing religious fundamentalism, and attempts to completely lock women in the house are at play, which we have seen with the withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention, as well. It is also clear that the government in Ireland has a political will to end male violence against women. There has never been such a will in Turkey, but there is none at all under the current government. Therefore, it feels a bit like idle talk. Now, I wonder what Cliona has to say about this evidence collection process, about sending the two parties with separate ambulances. Can she tell us a little more about that? Because it was many years ago, and that's all I remember right now. I also saw a practice in Denmark to protect the dignity of women who had been subjected to sexual violence. There were special sections in the gynecology departments that were responsible for working with survivors of sexual violence. In other words, when a woman goes to the hospital, she goes to the gynecology department; however, only she and the doctor on duty know whether she has been subjected to sexual violence or not. I mean it will not be known why she went there, and she will not be stigmatized as rape survivor. This was very important, very important to me. What would you think about such a practice?

Cliona Saidleair: So, if I have understood you... Excuse me. Some of these, I might not know, you know, in terms of the two separate ambulances. I suspect, that might be in terms of sexual violence if there is an ambulance involved. It will generally just be the victim and not the perpetrator. They will be going in different directions anyway.

Canan Arin: Actually, they go in the same direction, but the aim is to prevent DNA and similar evidence from getting mixed. Therefore, the woman is not in the same ambulance as the man, and their DNA don't get mixed. For instance, the hair, the body hair, the blood, etc. This possibility is prevented, and that struck me as a good practice. I wanted to ask you to explain this a little more.

Cliona Saidleair: My understanding is under our legal system the chain of evidence, what we call chain of evidence, is really critical. So, it is one of the

pieces that has shaped how we built our SVRCs because there is, you know, a doctor for example in the GP surgery collects evidence. We cannot use it because we need to be able to say we have the evidence inside, it was this evidence that belonged here, and was not contaminated. It remained secure inside and we know what happened all the way through until it reaches the court, maybe two years later. So, that chain of evidence is really critical, and it shapes our week. Besides, it is built around the preservation of the evidence and the chain of evidence. The perpetrator will not be going to the SATU. If there are samples and DNA samples taken from the perpetrator, it will be in a separate location. But today, we have SATUs, but we also have, in the police force we now have in Ireland, we call the DPSUs, they are specialists' units. So, this is new in Ireland, we have specialists' units. Again, they will be very trained, you know to be able to guard and protect and separate those pieces out. I am not sure that we do have separate ambulances, we may do have separate cars now from the DPSUs and the specialists' units. But I certainly talk to some of my colleagues on continental Europe. I am not sure that the chain of evidence that we have very strongly in the Irish legal system, is quite the same, you know, elsewhere. So, I do not know what is it in Turkey, you will be able to tell me more. So, I think that is what drives it. There is no point in forensics unless we can preserve that chain of evidence. I do not know if that quite answered your question.

Canan Arin: What do you think about this special unit in the gynecology part of the hospital?

Cliona Saidlear: There is again this special care done to preserve people's privacy. There is not a big sign on the door, you know, and most of them are through, most of them are in, maternity hospitals. But they are not necessarily... For example, we have children's SVRC and that is not based in a hospital at all. It is actually in an industrial estate, a unit in an industrial estate that is completely anonymous. The police go in with unmarked cars, people turn up there, people do not know what is inside there at all. So, the question of privacy is guarded very carefully because what we used to have was people sitting amongst, you know, all of the people going to the maternity hospital. Especially, if you had, because also of course, if you are a male victim of violence you ended up as a man sitting in a maternity hospital waiting in queue with all of the women. It is obvious why you are there because there is no other reason for you to be there. That there is care for privacy and in fact it is all called ahead, so you will be met at the door, you will not be waiting, you will be straight in. You will not be wandering around the hospital if you like or waiting in the hospital, you will be straight into the unit.

Enikő Pap: In Hungary there is a huge latency when we look at the victims' access to justice in this very specific field of rape and sexual violence.

A couple of years ago there was an international project on rape and attrition to rape. So whether how the cases are treated in the criminal justice response and for the case of Hungary, for example, it was a kind of interesting that very few cases were reported to the police, so, officially recognized by the system. The attrition rate, so the person did all those who just ended up with conviction was relatively high as compared to other countries. It means that only the cases reach the court practically or ending with punishment when there is some kind of strong evidence at least or maybe some kind of support system around the victim. So, I think it is a big signal as well that we should take into consideration. It is not because our criminal justice response is very perfect, it is because only those cases are started eventually at the police. When there is a chance, they will go forward with the whole criminal process. So, this is one comment. And the other comment, it is somehow related to privacy but also to the state responsibility. Because in basic cases of sexual violence in Hungary, I mean when there is no aggravation, there are no aggravating factors but a simple case so to say, the so-called private motion is required for the procedure, meaning that the victim needs to have a statement that she or he just requires the punishment of perpetrators. In many cases, decision makers, you know, are commenting that it is because of the victim's privacy and ownership. But on the other hand, as the survivors are telling us, it is rather a burden on their shoulders that they are responsible for the cases to move forward. Even if there is a public persecution, the persecution will go in that way, but if there is no statement for the victims then the procedure will end. So, it is a requirement to move forward and it is treated by the survivors that there is a burden on their shoulders, their responsibility to move forward with the cases.

Canan Arin: In Turkey's system, unfortunately, there is no independent judiciary, so judges make decisions in line with certain political views. I think the MeToo movement was very important for the whole world and for Turkey as well. It started in Turkey at some point, I know it is very difficult for women to admit it, to voice it. I mean it is very difficult for the person who has been subjected to this sort of violence; however, this movement has really influenced the courts and almost forced them to conduct an effective investigation. Therefore, I find the impact of social media on this particular issue very positive. I find it positive because it is really difficult to deal with patriarchy, it is really hard to defeat it. As the women's movement gets stronger, the patriarchy does its best to suppress it. They use all kinds of violence, and they ignore or dismiss lawsuits on grounds that are fabricated. In that respect, I think this social media movement is very important.

Enikő Pap: Social media is very important especially in those countries where there is no access to the public media like our countries. I mean

social media has a great importance for sending our messages, for, I do not know, advertising the services, the helping materials for the victims and then bystanders. So, this, definitely one hundred percent. On the other hand, we need to be all so conscious, I mean, about what kind of messages we are sending. And then, it is, for me, kind of similar to the MeToo movement. Then, it is very important, there is an awareness raising. Then, when women for example fear that “Hey! There is something that my herstory is recognized and I would go to the police and I will meet the same police officer who has a strong victim-blaming attitude.” Then, what will be the consequences on the side of survivor? So again, it is very hard. I mean operations in those countries where there is minimum or zero awareness, training, professional protocols, guidelines, whatever cooperation between public administration and women’s rights NGOs. So then, it is very hard, you know, to say that “Hey! You can now go to the police!” Because there is a big question mark whether they have this police officer with a victim-blaming attitude but it is same for the prosecutors, same for the judges. I mean a careful balancing is needed from us what is the messages or at least, you know, to prepare the victims and the survivors that all of this thing is happening with them is not justice, it is injustice, it is a violation of their rights and the institutions may not follow these women’s rights and feminist principles. So, they need to be somehow prepared for that, that they will not get or might not get the proper assistance and help because of the several layers of patriarchy and victim-blaming attitudes and power relation gaps in the system.

Cliona Saidler: I think no matter at what point of development we are at it still remains a really co-part of our work is that fundamental piece of speaking truth to power and because patriarchy will tell its story and will always try to overwrite. I think we have to try up that pie chart because certainly for us as soon as, you know, we start to get the funding from the state, we start to get that pie in... What it becomes is to deliver these services and not do any other work, you know. So, we have to protect the piece where we actually speak truth to power. We have to be creative around that and a great opportunity is social media, with all of its pitfalls but it is one way, and I think something as feminist organizations, until we finished with the patriarchy, we just need to continue to try to find creative ways to tell the story. No matter where we are. One of the things that I would really encourage you to think about is one of the things that we have to develop a fight for, is that we have built our data system and that is basically that survivors, we collect survivors’ data and we tell that story, we tell that to the government. We contradict the government when they tell us they are doing a great job with that data of the survivors. But we have to protect that space, that space has not been funded, you know. So, the space where we truth to power is always something that, I think, is a common thing that we always have to keep alive.

Suzan Saner: There are numerous and diverse barriers to the process of seeking rights, justice, and healing for survivors of sexual violence. Personal, social, institutional barriers... One such barrier is the fourth judicial reform package recently adopted in Turkey, which devalued and invalidated psychological trauma reports. Against this, women in professional organizations, such as the Turkish Medical Association or the Psychiatric Association of Turkey, are constantly working and are doing some good things with the strength of the MeToo movement and the feminist movement. Policy documents and policy statements on the prevention of sexual violence and promotion of gender equality were adopted this year. These are good news. Cliona talked about the cycle of victim blaming and traumatization, it was very informative. It is really important not to get into these cycles, not to get caught into these cycles of victim-blaming and re-traumatization, and if you do, it is equally important to recognize it early and get out of it, and this can be achieved only with solidarity. There is not even a single Rape Crisis Center in Istanbul, but Mor Çatı assumes this role in a sense, and it works with feminist principles. There are on the other hand human rights advocacy groups having reservations about the increase in such centers. They suggest that instead of increasing the number of such centers, the people who accept applications to gynecology clinics, psychiatry clinics or ER services should be equipped with basic skills on how to approach sexual violence cases. And they think that due to the fear of stigmatization, people will not apply to a place with a “Rape Crisis Center” sign on the door. They argue that such centers will have a negative impact on the reporting rates and that physicians and psychologists in places that already provide healthcare services should focus on providing them with the skills to receive applications about sexual violence. I wanted to ask you about this view.

Cliona Saidleair: I think the key word there you say is, instead of. For us, this is the problem. Because I think everything you say is true but of course what you have to keep an eye on there is that if you think what is the state’s interest here and what is the police force’s interest? They need survivors, they need survivors into the justice system for the justice system to work. So they are driven by that need. A survivor does not necessarily have that need. A survivor may make different choices about what they want right now in terms of their responses and their journey. But if there is a system that is driven by the needs of the criminal justice system then they will begin to be locked into. And, of course, for the state, this is really valuable because as feminist organizations that I do not know for us, we have crime statistics that are reported on quarterly bases and annual bases and every time they come out we say, “We are lucky. You got these reports in, and this detection rate, and this nutrition rate. Isn’t this terrible? You must do better.” Crime statistics are terrible for the state and because it gives us something to talk back to them with. So, of course they want to improve those numbers, but this puts pressure on survivors to become a part of the system. So, we

then have to be careful that we continually create space where survivors do have choices around what they choose to do. So yes, I think what you are looking at there is what we would call that piece where is the medicalized model and it is the piece of one or the other. And for us, we would be very strongly saying it is both. It is both. And if you just have a medicalized model of sexual violence, SATU and SVRC, what you are doing there is essentially treating the individual, you are treating them for medical harm and you are collecting the forensics. You are treating them as an individual, you do not actually need any sort of feminist analyses or to put that into context of this happened. That piece Enikő was talking about in terms of trauma, on the trauma informed sexual violence that says, "This is about patriarchy and this is not you, this is bigger than you and actually it is a shared experience that you have with others." That is a really important part of the feminist piece. It is, you know, while I would, you know, most of the, our partners who work in, the doctors the nurses who work in sexual violence, and even the police who work in sexual violence in Ireland, we would say a lot of them would call themselves feminists and indeed are feminists but they do not carry that trauma-informed feminist piece, you know, that is our job to make sure that the survivor stays in the center. And that is what we fight for always that the survivor has the choice and the autonomy in it. Does that answer your question?

Suzan Saner: Yes, it does. Thank you very much. I'd like to add something. A recently published report states that 95% of the detainees and convicts in prisons in Turkey are men, and this problem cannot really be solved by putting more men in prison. I think we need to focus on restorative justice and health, healthcare policies that center around the victim, the survivor, and the justice policy.

Cliona Saidlear: I think you are right. I think that one of the things that... We have set up this measure with this criminal justice system but you know, even somewhere like Ireland where we have been prioritizing this for a long time across government numbers are just small in terms of conviction rates but the persecutions are just small. It will never be an answer by itself, the criminal justice system and it is always going to be about, if you like, an example setting. So, there is a question for us about what else do the survivors need, what else is out there, what does justice in the broader context, not just in the institution of the criminal justice system, but as just it does look like. There has been a lot of talk for the last twenty years about restorative justice which we just do not think works for sexual violence at all. We know some people who have gone through it, but it is not just really for sexual violence, this is not a good model for us. But I am interested in and I do not know very much about it yet, but I am interested in what is emerging from Black Lives Matter movement what is called transitional justice. That is really about the whole of the community but of course it

depends on who controls the community. How does that justice happen? But there is something about the criminal justice system as an instrument of the state, it is very important but can only do so much and maybe we need to take it more broadly and creatively about what does justice, in the bigger picture, look like.

Enikő Pap: Thank you very much for your question or sharing your concerns Suzan. For me it is also a question of available resources. As a feminist NGO, for example. Also a question of prioritization and a kind of question of short term goals and long term goals. We just discussed with NANE Institution a day before that what if the police would say that we need to train five thousand police officers by next week. So of course we would not be available for this. I mean, a small group of committed but still it is a big number. Feminist NGOs cannot do it. So, I mean, maybe if we look at the short-term purposes it might be a good strategy to at least provide some training or elaborate some kind of protocols for those professionals who are dealing with victims/survivors of the sexual violence. So, it could be a kind of entry point to train those, to have those with the necessary knowledge, competence. To have some protocols, professional guidelines, what to follow, how to treat victims, what are the do-s, what are the don'ts, and to introduce some kind of quality assurance and monitoring because it is also important to follow what is happening in reality. And in the long term, to have specialization, to have specialized centers for example, both Rape Crisis Centers or Sexual Violence Referral Centers. I am thinking in the Hungarian case, for example, it is really about the resources, prioritization but also, I mean, the opportunities which are quite limited for us for example. So, we had good cooperation with the Budapest institutional part because Budapest has a mayor from the opposition. But we could not imagine that, you know, at the national level that the government would invite us for a real corporation to the will of any kind of Rape Crisis Center, for example, or at least to allow us to do it. I mean this question is about resources as well as opportunities and state-NGO corporation and then its quality or non-quality so to say.

Ebrar Nefes: It has thought-provoking aspects practically and politically. When thinking about discussions on justice, it is also necessary to think how the goal of complying with gender equality fits into this discussion. Enikő, you mentioned that there are facilitators in the group work, how are these facilitators selected, are they NANE volunteers? Cliona, you also mentioned that volunteers can give support at Rape Crisis Centers. What does it mean for you to have volunteers while building feminist solidarity? For example, in Mor Çatı, one of the important things for us in building solidarity is volunteerism. Most of us can start by saying that we are Mor Çatı volunteers, we mean that we volunteer for this solidarity. What is the importance of your organizations?

I will start with the question about the facilitators, thank you very much. It is really an important key of the working group. So, currently we have five facilitators and one is in the process to be trained as well. All of them are really, very actively involved in NANE's work. I mean as a minimum, they should be NANE's volunteers. Volunteers mean that we have a strong training for volunteers. It is different occasions you have to go through, so the facilitators need to have this competence, this knowledge to do this work. At the moment, old NANE sisters are doing this job and then they are also taking care of mentoring for the newcomers, also NANE's volunteers to have this role as well. So, the entry point is to have the NANE volunteers. We are doing it inside so to say. I would like to connect to your question about how volunteering is important and because of the nature of the job, it is important to have a proper selection process. For us there are different requirements for different kinds of activities in the organization. The strongest one, when you are dealing with speaking with the victims/survivors. For example, like the helpline so there is this basic volunteer training for everyone even if you are standing in an event and then distributing the informational materials or you are responding to the helpline. For the helpline and for the personal contact there are stronger requirements, additional processes, like, you know, you are sitting with the helpline kind of assisting or hearing what the helpline operators are doing, then there is this co-responding to the calls so when there is one experienced helpline operator and the one who is learning the process. So, they are operating together. There are different requirements and different processes. There is the basic, which is strong to select, who can be a NANE volunteer, and there are additional tasks and activities which require a greater preparation and assistance.

Cliona Saidlear: On the question of volunteers, I take a bit of a long view on this. Our movement has been active for fifty years and it has started with volunteers. We still have volunteers involved but the story gets, has been through sort of... We have been over few hills on this one. Because there is a number of questions that arise and impact, it is bigger than us, it is not about us. It is about the economy, it is about where the economy is going. Of course, the central question is what are we providing to survivors and how are we ensuring that both safe and best practice, specialized and actually doing the work we wanted to. What Enikő was saying there about the training for the helpline volunteers, are the volunteers who do not do other work in Rape Crisis Centre, and then of course, once you are in to specialized one and one counselling that is a really highly skilled job. So, one of the things we did, probably about twenty years ago, we really fought to have that highly skilled specialist service for survivors recognized and valued. So, we fought for that to be paid professionals if you like. After that, beyond the same pay scales as professionals within the health sector. So, one of our fight surrounds the dignity of the survivors was around fighting for the dignity of the people who work in Rape Crisis. Because, of course,

one of the considerations about the volunteers is that you end up with a question about class. Who is in? Who has the time? Who has the time to volunteer and who does not? There is of course the very skills that we know we need in house. At the moment, Ireland was very badly hit and crushed. But we have recovered out of it. But the funding for the Rape Crisis Centers is, you know, is coming back up slowly. One of the challenges we have today is that we cannot hire people because we do not have competitive paying conditions for those highly skilled counselors. You have to have the feminist piece. We are here because we are committed to it. But you also need to be building or establishing the highest possible services and standards for survivors and it is not okay to say that women should not have a pension and should not be paid well. Because this is women's work, by and large. So, why would not the women working in Rape Crisis have the same paying conditions and pensions in and rights as all other workers and that is part of our respect to the survivors. As I say, the volunteer question is a really complicated question. I think it is a bigger question about where we are in terms of economy, and of course, professionalizing comes at its own price. You know, because part of what happens then is that the only thing that is funded and valued is that post. So how do you keep alive the prevention piece and how do you stop the state saying, "We simply pay you for the hours of counseling you are delivering." We are like, "We are also a movement." And they are like, "No. We are not paying you for that." So, there is a lot in it.

Ebrar Nefes: As you said, volunteering has many dimensions.

Merve: I have a question for Enikő. To my mind, support groups are particularly important because when the support systems are limited, the significance of solidarity and self-organization among women greatly expands. Apart from the support groups you have established with your own resources, are there any people who want to establish their own independent support groups? Do they come and tell you "We want to establish a support group in this city, how can you support us?" Do you receive such requests? If so, how do you support them? There are very new support groups in Turkey, they were started as individual initiatives. There are those who request resources for such initiatives. When I receive such a request, I would like to be able to provide support. If you have any advice on this, I'd like to ask your advice so that I can pass it on to others.

Enikő Pap: Thank you very much for your questions Merve. Actually we do not have such experience, specifically for the sexual violence support groups. It is kind of still in an early phase, so to say. So far, we had only four groups with this methodology. So, it is kind of new, even for us. We are having this learning, we are shaping the programme according to the experiences. So, it is quite new. On the other hand, we have some examples with these "Power to Change" support groups which I mentioned to you

before. It was developed under an international project. It is for domestic violence survivors. We have a longer history for those support groups. Now, there are examples of other groups or other professionals, mostly who are in close connection, professional connection with us, who are organizing such groups. I think one of the keys here is to have a partnership before, so it is recommended that you have a partnership with those organizations that they are doing. Also have this training of trainers for those who are facilitating the groups. But still, it is important to have a kind of mentoring when there is something happening then there is a person or there is an expert they can turn to.

Cliona Saidlear: One of the things for us where we are at with groups and self-organizing survivors' groups as I have mentioned already is that really there is a lot of survivors who come to a Rape Crisis Center are those groups and they are like we have our community of solidarity, we have people we can share with and people who support us in our life around the incident. But what they want to do is they want to organize, and they want to be activists and they want to create change. So, one of the things we are looking at is, and in fact most of us are engaging with those groups, about how we support them in being politically active and effective. Actually, the facilitation is not so much the psychological piece because they can come to us if they want that. But, what we are trying to facilitate and support them with is how they can best access government and access creative change in the community and in the national legislation.


Figan: As I listened to the meeting, a question crossed my mind. We heard the attempts to protect the honor of women who are subjected to rape. However, we managed to make the entire world, the street, acknowledge the violence against women, violence against children, and male violence. Therefore, this talk about protecting the honor of women who are subjected to rape did not sound very good to me. Because their dignity is not compromised, why reproduce such a terminology here? Secondly, we say both male violence and patriarchy and feminist struggle. But when the male politicians need, the gains can be easily taken back. Should we talk about politics from a different angle? Are there bottlenecks where our politics gets stuck? I was curious about your take on this.

Cliona Saidlear: I really hear you about the dignity question. I think I am using it in a different way. I think it is not, if you like, related to the question of the honor of the survivor. It is about respecting their autonomy as they go forward. So, it is less about what happened, what was done to them and is about what is happening right now. When I talk about respecting their dignity, it is about that they are not brought into a process or denied a process or something in between they are not in control of. If you like, their dignity is about that they get to make the choices about what happens

next. So, that would be what I have in mind. But absolutely I think you are right to be mindful of that because it is in it. Everything we do, isn't it? But it is coming from the culture. In terms of the patriarchy, I think we are in, and you know better than I do, an incredible phase of feminist backlash, there is no question. It looks very, it is here in Ireland, but it looks very different in Ireland than it does for the East. But I think that is, I think we need to strategize about where we put our energy given the landscape at the moment. It is a really difficult time, I think.

Enikő Pap: Thank you for your remark, Figan. I agree that sometimes the perspective also need to be taken into account. For me, dignity is really a part of the human rights agenda and human rights. I could connect through this way to dignity perspective. As for the patriarchy and for the backlash Cliona was mentioning it might not be a very cheerful ending comment but in case of Hungary, for example, we are experiencing that backlash without any lashes. I mean we are going back since we have not gone further so far. It is a really difficult situation to address, I agree with all of you. We need to strategize. On the one hand, we have less and less resources and less and less pieces to do. So, I mean, we are in a very complicated situation, I am saying it for the whole Europe. Also, we could say that it is international, what is happening. And especially it is quite evident and quite challenging and quite hard in those countries who are leading to diminishing these democratic processes, places. Then I believe that both Hungary and Turkey are in a leading way on that. The bad thing is that as long as there is no strong international reaction to that then this is a green light for other actors, for other countries and for other so-called leaders that they could do it, who have an intention and political view to do so. So, I think it really requires a very strong international response as well to all of what is happening in our countries, in the field of women's rights but I mean even in a wider spectrum of human rights and democracy.

Ebrar Nefes: Thank you everyone for your participation.



WORKSHOP 3:
EXPERIENCES
ON ALTERNATIVE
STRUGGLE
MECHANISMS
AGAINST MALE
VIOLENCE

Kübra Karagöz: In this workshop, we will talk about Experiences on Alternative Struggle Mechanisms against Male Violence. Tamar Çitak is joining us today from the Domestic Abuse Intervention Center, Vienna, Austria and Angela McGraw from Women and Children First, USA. Tamar was born in 1963 in Istanbul. She moved to Vienna in 1983 to study Business Administration at the Vienna University of Economics and Business. After her university graduation, she returned to Istanbul for a few years. In 1991, she moved back to Vienna, applied to the vacancy that the Vienna Municipality had opened for afternoon care for migrant children at the time and joined the Association of Viennese Youth Centres. Having witnessed various difficulties girls faced, she devoted herself to feminist work with girls. Since her job did not provide the opportunity for extensive individual care, she transferred to the Austrian Integration Fund. She was appalled by the degree of violence women faced. Although she was actually in charge of the fifth district, she worked with women from all over Vienna, as she was the only Turkish-speaking consultant at the time. After the Vienna Domestic Abuse Intervention Center was opened in 1998, the social workers working at the Center contacted her frequently, leading her to begin working part-time at the family center. Angela, would you like to briefly introduce yourself?

Angela McGraw: My name is Angela McGraw, and I am the executive director at a domestic violence shelter in Arkansas. It is the largest domestic violence shelter and the oldest one in this area. I have been in it for about twenty-four years now. I came to be in this field as a survivor of domestic violence. Then, I ended up working in this shelter I am working in now. I worked before and I worked in a couple of other programmes. I have a Bachelor's Degree in Human Services, with an emphasis on victim/survivor services and a Master's degree in Counseling. I think that is about it. I will kind of share a little bit more about the shelter here, in a few minutes.

Kübra Karagöz: Thanks a lot Angela, we will begin with Tamar's presentation.

Tamar Çitak: Hello everyone and I would like to thank Mor Çatı for the invite. Today, I will tell you about the psychosocial support provided to women and children who have been subjected to male violence in Austria, in particular, in Vienna. The Vienna Domestic Abuse Intervention Center was established in February 1998, after the Protection Against Violence Act came into force in May 1997. It is an institution recognized within the law. We are autonomous in our internal affairs but contractually affiliated to the Austrian Federal Ministry of Women and Civil Services and responsible for the state of Vienna. Each state has the same institution; there are nine states, each with an intervention center. After the incident of violence is reported to the police, the police inform us about it with a form, via e-mail. Our main duty is to immediately contact the person subjected to violence and give her the information and support she needs as soon as possible, even before she reaches out her own contacts to get support. In cases of

violence, the law grants the police the authority to restrict the perpetrator's access to home for fourteen days. Local courts could extend this period up to six months if the person subjected to violence is married, and up to one year if not married. After the police, intervention centers undertake all this work to support and give information.

What do we do in this situation? As soon as we receive a notification from the police, we first contact the person subjected to violence and conduct a risk assessment. So, above all, we look at the extent to which she is in danger. Because we know from our experience that not every perpetrator abides by the fourteen-day restriction order given by the police; some violate the ban, and women and children may still be under threat. If this is the case, we try to take the necessary measures. We cooperate with both the police and the prosecutor's office for an arrest warrant. If the house is still not so safe for the women and her children, if she has any, we place her in a shelter, albeit temporarily, to ensure her safety. This is our main task; however, after that we offer many other services. Especially in cases where criminal complaint is filed, we provide psychosocial escort to women in criminal cases, again with a budget allocated by the Ministry of Justice. In serious cases such as harassment, rape, stalking, serious injury, death threats or long years of psychological and physical violence, feminist lawyers we work with get involved in the criminal case to defend the rights of those who have been subjected to violence, i.e. women and children. If the woman or child has suffered physical or psychological harm, we make sure that they receive compensation, and these works are carried out by lawyers. Our task is psychosocial support. We first give information to the woman about the course of the criminal case, what she will face when she appears before the court and the judge, what questions she might receive, or what measures we have taken to prevent her from encountering the perpetrator in the courthouse. Our second main duty under the Protection Against Violence Act is to have injunction orders get issued. After the fourteen-day order given by the police, we apply to the court to get an injunction.

This has now become such an established system in Austria that even if the woman applies to the court on her own and tells the judge that she wants to file a petition, the judge refers the woman back to our institution. Here, too, we sometimes have confrontations with courts and judges. The woman wants to file her petition without applying to the intervention center and getting our support, they still refer her to us. The reason for that is the piled-up case files in the courts and in the justice system. Judges, of course, are pleased with the fact that we write the petitions in accordance with the law after talking to the woman and informing her. The fourteen-day ban in the law disallows the perpetrator from coming to the house, being around the house or from being within the 100-meter perimeter of the person/persons exposed to violence. However, when we issue an injunction order

in the court, the law provides greater possibilities. If the person subjected to violence is working, we can extend the order to her workplace, or if the child goes to a daycare center, to the daycare center, school, etc. For this reason, it is very convenient for the judges that we first talk to women and submit the petitions afterwards.

In the past, those who wanted to submit the petition would sign it and then we would mail it to the courts. This caused not only a waste of time, but also a stress for us as we had to submit the petition within the fourteen days to ensure that safety measures were not interrupted. During the pandemic, with a special circular by the Ministry of Justice, we started to submit court petitions via e-mail, and since October 1, we can enter the judicial system via an electronic platform and submit the petition online, like lawyers can. This is a good development for us because information such as the file number and the assigned judge is sent to us after we submit the electronic petition. In the past, we had to follow up on this information over the phone.

Here, sometimes the other party, that is the perpetrator, also has fundamental rights in the face of injunction orders. They have the right to object to the injunction orders. As I said earlier, it is six months for those who are married, and one year for those who are not. But if he wants to object, he can. In such cases, the judge wants to listen to both parties in order to give the right decision. Here again, we accompany women for psychosocial support, we try to prevent the person subjected to violence from coming face to face with the perpetrator even in the courtroom. This is very important for women. In the first place, the act of violence has just been committed, she has just been subjected to violence and she may still be in shock. We know from experience that sometimes women cannot even distinguish who the judge is and who the prosecutor is. Everything proceeds very fast, so we know that this support is good for her. This is good for judges—we know this because we come together with judges in all local courts once a year and we discuss the shortcomings in our work, ways to correct them as well as the good developments. These are works that are favorable to people subjected to violence.

If a woman is married and wants to file for divorce, we can provide her with psychosocial support during the divorce, custody, and alimony cases upon her request and with a letter of the attorney. We never leave the woman alone in the courtrooms. Of course, not everyone demands this. I mean, some women can handle these matters on their own, but we are always ready to give this support for those who want it. In our experience, especially women who are not familiar with the judicial system, for instance migrant women, are more likely to seek our support.

I always say women, but we are responsible for the entire city of Vienna, and we work on the basis of the gender of the perpetrator and of those

subjected to violence who are referred to us by the police. But when we look at our statistics, 90% of the perpetrators are men while 10% are women. When we say 10% are women, we sure look at the police reports: what the woman tells the police about the incident of violence, and what the “victim” man tells. If the woman says that she has also been subjected to violence, we want to contact her with a feminist approach and want to listen to her side of the story about what happened that day even though it is not our duty, even when she is the perpetrator. We also organize our support activities accordingly.

Livelihood security is very important for us in the field of social services, we know this from experience. Let’s think of it like this: the woman has no income, she has young children at home, she does not work. The injunction order is six months or one year. If she cannot pay the rent, gas and electricity bills, or buy groceries for her children, it does not mean much for her if the injunction order is extended. Her priority is her life security. At this point, we try to provide plenty of support. In Austria, the system is fairly established. There is a lot of red tape, but we seem to have got through the bureaucracy for women and children who have been subjected to violence. This was made possible thanks to the long years of work of feminist associations and women’s workers. For instance, in such a case, we swiftly submit a petition for social security to the municipality and the social services institution, with the notification from the police annexed. Women are given financial support especially for their livelihood. But there are cases where the man has not paid the rent or bills for two or three months without her knowing. For these debts, we can request this amount for once with an extra petition from the municipality and social services. We submit this request to the municipality together with the report we write. The only condition they require from us is to learn the support plan, that is, the woman’s perspective. In other words, they want to find out whether this financial support will be useful. We present that support plan report to them. In other words, our plan to work with a woman, first and foremost, pertains to ensuring her life security, then filing for a divorce case, then filing a custody case, so on and so forth.

Following our report, the assistance arrives within two-three weeks; only then can we start talking about violence once the woman finds a time for a breather, and her life security is guaranteed. As I said, this applies to woman with low or no income. We have another opportunity both in shelters and in the intervention center. Although not in all states, municipalities also have social housing system. For instance, there is no social housing in rural areas, but in those states, we can talk to social services and the municipality. If the woman is not safe in that house for reasons such as stalking or an ex-husband coming to her doorsteps and harassing her even after the divorce, we can write a report focusing only on violence and life safety and hence we can get social housing for the woman from the municipality or

we can get the municipality to pay the rent deposit and real estate agency fees. We make sure that women move out of the houses in which they are subjected to violence. If the women want and we, their consultants, deem it necessary, we contact the mukhtar's office to ensure the confidentiality of their new address. The state and the public offices can access the address, but they are also informed that it is confidential so that they would make sure that the woman's address is never given to anyone else or recorded or written down in files. The shelters also have a similar system for women's post-shelter lives. These works are done not directly by the applications submitted by women themselves, but by the reports of the supporting institutions. That is, we submit the petition for the social housing, not the woman herself. In this way, the institutions try make sure whether women will be able to pay the rent or will be able to pay in six months' time. When the institutions see our report and the whole social support plan, women can of course become homeowners in a very short time. I will give you the example of Vienna. A normal citizen applying for these social houses has a waiting period up to three years, that is, there is a long waiting list. But when we apply for women, we receive a positive response within a week, and the house becomes key-ready within a week. So, it is a very expedited process. If there is no social housing in rural areas and if women do not have the financial means to pay the deposit and real estate agency fees, the Social Services pays these costs. That is, a solution is found in such cases too.

There are also certain practices for the post-shelter life in Vienna, although not in all states of Austria. If a woman is still traumatized after she leaves the shelter and if she does not have the strength to work although the acute violence is passed through, the shelters have their own houses, that is temporary houses for the transition period. These houses, in agreement with the social housing unit of the respective municipality, can be contracted to the woman for a period of one year. The period varies depending on the woman's needs. In the case of migrant women, sometimes they do not have residence permit, and hence right to work. They wait for it as they cannot work without a visa. They may still bear trauma symptoms and need therapy. Women may have any kind of illness, or they, especially young women, may have never lived on their own in their entire life, have not learned how to pay the rent, how to deal with bureaucracy. Women are taught about all these and then they are given social housing with an indefinite contract after a one-year transition period.

I can also talk about employment: we work very well with the employment agency. Both shelters and intervention centers in Austria have another well-functioning system: each employment agency branch employs a staff responsible for women and we work in tandem with them. For example, if a woman we support immediately needs a job, we can apply and find a suitable job for her among the positions held by the employment agency and place her

to work. Our aim here is to cause as little exhaustion in women as possible and to provide her with some comfort. We aim to ensure that her mind and body are relaxed and to provide the support needed to enable her to enjoy all forms of security she needs as she transitions to a life without violence. Austria is a very bureaucratic country, but it is a functioning bureaucracy, albeit slowly. For women who are not used to it, it is very difficult to navigate in this bureaucracy, so there are situations where they need to get support.

To mention therapy a little, the state of Vienna has a hotline that we work in cases of acute trauma. There are also institutions where women can go within the first half an hour and get psychological support in an acute situation. There are also therapy centers we collaborate. We work with them and refer women to them. Therapy services are not provided in intervention centers and shelters. So, we always refer them to the institutions we collaborate. We know from our experience and conversations with psychotherapist friends that especially in cases of sexual harassment, rape, or severe violence, they recommend long-term trauma therapy after the entire judicial process is over. After that we refer them to an institution from which they will receive long-term therapy. In severe cases, the social security system and the healthcare system cover the psychological support costs. In less severe cases, unfortunately the expenses are not covered, meaning that women have to pay a certain fee for therapy. There are also feminist therapists we cooperate with. They can sometimes talk to the woman and offer therapy either free or for a nominal fee. At the same time, if a woman has filed a criminal complaint and we accompany her in the judicial process, we have the right to demand these therapy fees from the perpetrator. If the perpetrator is imprisoned and hence with no income, if he is not in jail yet does not have an income generating job, that is, if we cannot get from him the money needed, we can submit a petition to the Ministry of Social Services for funding. With that petition, the Ministry of Social Services gives us this money up front, and they go after the perpetrator to get that money from the perpetrator. Thus, the woman can also be spared from these bureaucratic procedures. Moreover, the ministry can identify if the perpetrator is working or has other financial means, and they can directly contact his employer and commence enforcement proceedings for his salary. I will leave it here, we can continue with the Q&A.

Kübra Karagöz: Thanks a lot Tamar. We will move on to Angela's presentation.

Angela McGraw: Hello again. We have fifty-two states in the United States and there are shelters that are all over the country. The state that I am in is Arkansas. We have thirty-three domestic violence shelters in our state. Back in the early 2000's, they became very strongly encouraging and there is a law now that you have to be able to serve everybody that is a victim. Our shelter actually is the first shelter they allowed men to come into the

shelters while they were identified as victims. Initially in the early years, because our shelter has been the oldest one, so we actually birth, I guess, in 1976. It is kind of interesting because I have ran into, I had lunch with somebody that was one of the founders of our shelter here. They had a little house that was given to them and the woman said they really thought that this house was the beginning of it. Somewhere in their mindset, they were thinking that the domestic violence would end simply by getting the ones that need help immediately. As all of you know, that has not been the case. Our shelter has fifty-four people in it. We have actually had up to sixty-three people in our shelter at one time. I sometimes ask my staff how in the world do they do that to put the babies in, play pins and kids in separate beds and make conference rooms into bedrooms if we have to. So, I will do whatever it takes. During the pandemic, there has been some extra pending that has allowed us to put people in hotels as well which has been helpful. Especially for the federal level. In federal level, they have suggested that our shelters have half the capacity. So, we needed to be able to have a place to put the victims.

I am going to just tell you a little bit about our shelters services and then our share of a little bit about our systematic part of domestic violence here or intimate partner violence. When you go into our shelter, you only get into our shelter in one way, through hotline -we have 24-hour hotline-and/or the police. Those are the two ways that you can get into our shelter. Our shelter is, probably much like yours, locked-down, you know, we have cameras, panic buttons and all of the safety tools that are necessary to keep the people inside safe. But, differently there is another domestic violence shelter here in my city. It is run by a religious group. They get to pick different standards that we do not. So, like some of those, they allow just women to come into their shelter, they have to stay there for nine months and they cannot work during that time. They take their cell-phones from them. So it is a very structured environment. As I am sure you also know that not all women, and I to also say women, because I think probably last year we have total of maybe three or four men here, coming to the shelter. Our numbers are still likely to be women that are the victims of domestic violence. When they come into our shelter, then we will do an assessment with them just to make sure that there is actually domestic violence. We do have a lot of people in our area who are actually homeless. We have to make sure that we have enough room for everybody. I will tell you that when the police actually are involved with these situations, we have what we call an assessment that is done. The law enforcement will determine if they need to make a phone call to the shelter at that point because of a healthy relationship that is. Sometimes the victims will do that, sometimes they will not. As for our sharing, the other shelters are very structured and our shelter follows an empowerment model, so it is really led by the victim and how they want to proceed with their situation. When they come to our

shelter, once they are in the doors we let them have their cellphones, we allow them to come and go as they want to. We actually just walk beside them or walk behind them and let them take the lead of their own lives. If they are needing assistance from us, then we will do what we can to assist them. In the early years, years and years ago, we used to be very much structured with a point system like if you did not do your chores or those types of thing you get exit in shelter. It means that maybe being back in your abusive relationship. When I became the director in 2013, we changed that model to be more of an apartment model for them. I guess I see sometimes how it can be difficult for them as well because I remember one particular time a woman that was down at the wash-machine and she was just looking at it. She had no idea how to use one. Life skills are definitely important and I do not think sometimes they even know what those mean. Our advocates are really important as far as helping them with that. When law enforcement does get a victim and they end up calling the shelter and they come in, they will go through the assessment period. Sometimes they will go through support groups and that is depending upon them as well. It is not mandatory but we do find that the people here are more involved with the domestic violence support groups, they will be more successful in staying out of the abusive relationship. Here, in the US we have an average going back to the perpetrator about seven times, so, of course we want to break that but we also do not want to be judgmental. We want the victims to come back to our shelter in which they will get out on their own. Our shelter is an emergency domestic violence shelter. So, unlike the one I told you about just a few minutes ago where they have to stay there for nine months, they can only stay there for forty-five days to sixty days in our shelter. It seems like a very short time to get somebody into working or even into housing and it is. But what we have found is that people can do that, our domestic violence numbers are so massive around here that we have to keep people moving along. That is one of the reasons why the other programme that is here, the structured one works for some people because they are needing that, they come from an environment that is very structured. They do not know how to be in anything different than that. They cannot bring all of their children with them, if they have adult children that are with them, they just have to be underneath of their own name in our shelters. We kind of start working with them in a different-case plan. Usually during the intake process we will find out, sometimes during the air, sometimes during our support groups, we will find out that there was rape that was involved in their intimate partner violence relationship or they have had previous situations as sexual violence against them. We feel like it is really important because there is a lot of therapy that surrounds them, a lot of healing that has to take place. Another thing is just identifying that even though you are in a relationship you can also be raped. There are so many times the women we work with do not actually acknowledge that or they are fearful of talking about that. Here in 2017 we actually became a dual agency. We do not only work with

the victims of domestic violence but also work with the victims of sexual violence. We go to hospitals accompanying with them if they are needing like a rape kit down on them. Although I will tell with our sexual violence court cases, we are not very successful in getting them prosecuted. I am not sure that there is any difference from anywhere else. Those are really hard things for us to get into the court. I am going to skip real fast to the sexual assault programme because if they go there in addition to the crisis intervention that we have, we also have a separate hotline for the Sexual Assault Centre. We also do support groups all over the place. We kind of like a trainer to the trainer where we will work with the group and with the curriculum, we used to train them on that curriculum. Then we follow them, as just kind of support, while they develop their own support group in their areas. So, like an example that would be on the college campuses. If they have someone who is willing to facilitate sexual assault support group, we help, mentor them into developing that. Then we back off and we let them go ahead, take over it. If they need any assistance or any support from us, they can ask.

We have a military base here, that is local. We had, I mean, there is a hundreds of women going to those groups and then the last year they are having another one that is for men because there is such a need for sexual violence for men that needed to have support. So, that is become a really big part of our sexual assault programme. There is the crisis intervention, they are going to hospitals and then the support groups and our sexual assault programme. Then, we are going back to the victim when they come into our shelter. Oftentimes, many of them do not come with anything when they come into our doors. So we will provide them with everything from sheets to blankets to pillows, hygiene items, diapers. I always tell people that everything you need in your home is exactly what we need in our home, but it takes at time sixty-eight people because that is exactly how many we are needing. The pandemic has caused it to not have a lot of items in our stores. So, we were really starting to collect a lot earlier. Because we know our numbers will get really high here in the next few weeks. Once they meet with the case, we call them advocates. Once they meet with them, determine if they are needing a job or they are needing to go and get their ID or if they are needing an order of protection. Then we start sending them to the different places that they need to go.

We have a children's programme. Our Children's Programme is a pretty big deal for us. Of course we know that to break the cycle of violence we need to work with the children and we want them to have hope and be able to feel like their past does not define their future. We really work with them and try to help change. Sometimes I am really amazed how children talk to their mums. I should not be amazed, I mean, but I have heard kids call their mums all kinds of things, all the names and we have to redirect them

and to explain them... You know, "There is a better way of talking to our mums and this is how you need to do it." Our hands are not for hitting and those types of things. We are really trying to be good models, role models for them. So, we are the first shelter in our state that actually lets men start working in our shelter. We actually realised that it was important for children to be able to see men who are actually positive, not all of them are bad men. So, we let men be advocates in our shelter. We have a guide who is our maintenance person who is walking around with candies in his pocket -not that it is a good thing- but he walks around with candies in his pocket all the time. This has been really good for us in our agency to be able to do that, we have noticed that a lot of shelters are doing the same thing now which is good. We have a camp during the summer, that is for our children. This is where they get to go for a week, where they get to just be kids. We do have a curriculum that we follow with the camp. It is called Camp Hope America, Arkansas. It is an evidence-based model that we follow. It is just a really great place to just really focus on being a kid. I have seen kids, they have actually went into Camp Hope where they have been playing the more the parent role in the family because they have to take on those behaviours when mum has been focused on the abuser. I have seen kids, after a couple of days into camp, just changed from being an adult figure to being a little kid. For me, it is just extremely, kind of, mind-boggling but exciting too, to see the kids being all in an experience like that when they have not been able to for so long. At our Children's Programme, we also have a person that sits at our shelter and watches the kids while mum goes to counseling or she goes to a job interview, or she has to get an order protection. Some of the shelters actually have a day-care center at their shelters but we just have somebody that is there, just to take care of the kids and watch them while mums go to do their different things. We also have a programme that mums can apply for, it gives them assistance in child-care. The goal is when they come into the shelter and identify they need a job or they need income, we will send them to what we call the Department of Human Services here. We have them signed up for all the things that they are needing as far as gathering assistance. From there, they will be able to get these items. That takes some time especially if they need their ID or if they are needing birth certificates or if they are needing the social security number cards. All of that takes time to collect and then be able to go and get the government assistance that you are needing. But that is where the advocates walk beside them and help them, make sure that they get to the places that they need to. The other part of our children's programme is that we have an education coordinator who actually goes out to our schools and after school programmes and those types of things, talks about healthy and unhealthy relationships. There was actually a new law that was put in place here, in Arkansas, my state in 2015 that made it mandatory for all eighth graders in schools to actually get schooling or education on the dynamics of dating violence. They have to get that during

October, Domestic Violence Awareness Month, and then in February in Dating Violence Awareness Month. In both of those months they have to get that information in the eighth grade. Which is really really good because as a survivor nobody did that kind of thing when I was in high school. When I got out of an abusive relationship, I had no idea what a domestic violence shelter was. At least we are getting the resources here to let our young people know that people are here to help them if they need it.

We do have counseling services at our shelter. I will tell you and I wish our counseling services were better here tomorrow. It sounds like you have a little bit of a better place when it comes to this. Our mental health services here are really lacking and a lot of times that the women that come to our shelter will not even get any mental health services before they end up leaving. They will get on the list, perhaps but to be able to actually get into somebody, which is really disappointing because we all know that people dealing with this type of trauma in their lives are needing some counseling. Some therapy in some skills to be able to move through that in the future. We do have a counseling advocate on staff where they just, kind of, help them through the feelings and stuff that they are going through. If they are needing any medication or anything that is a lot more advanced as far as therapeutic, they are probably not going to get it while they are with us at our shelter. I do have to say that, that is one of the things that is probably a little disappointing when you think about the short-term that they are in our shelter because it does not allow them to be able to have as they are leaving.

We also have a court advocacy programme. I have a court advocate that is located at the courthouse and she actually helps the victims to fill out the order protections. Although, here we cannot touch the order protection, they have to do it on their own. Sometimes when it is hard for them to know the wording or whatever they need to on that, we will have them write it down or we will help them write it on a separate piece of paper then we will have them put it on the paper that they need to go to the court. I would think that anything that came through the pandemic might have been good. They would have been able to know that doing it electronically is possible and it is a lot easier and it is a lot safer for victims. But somehow, they did not get the memo on that and so we are still happening to try to educate them about that. So, I feel like we are kind of going backwards again. We are doing some work around that. When our victims go to the courthouse, they literally have to go to six locations in the courthouse before they get a protection order. You can imagine just after going to the first or second place, you know how hard that would be and how easy it would be just to walk out to the courthouse and decide not to get the order protection. We do have restraining orders, order protections and no contact orders but the only one that has a resting power is the order of protection which means that if it is violated then the police can go and pick the perpetrator. We have

a temporary order at first and they usually have to be, there has to be a permanent hearing followed so it is usually about twenty, twenty-five days and it has to be done within thirty- no exceptions. Then there is just the permanent order of hearing and that is when the perpetrator is invited to come back to the courthouse with the victim and they both go in front of the judge. Again, I do wish that was done differently because, I think, one of the hardest places for victims is the court. Being in front of the perpetrator is extremely difficult but it has been a slow process in educating our law here that victims should have more rights. We actually find out here in our court system that perpetrators have more rights than victims do and it is not a very good process.

In addition to our children and doing education in the community we do that as adults as well and we do provide a lot of support groups. In order to uphold standards, we have to provide those people in the community as well too. When someone is in our shelter they might make a decision that they need housing and we do have a transitional housing programme where it is considered scattered housing where they can go and identify the place that they want to stay and we will help them with that. We have three different areas of our transitional housing programme that we work with. The first programme is finding another programme that will work best for them. In an example of that we have a mental health institute that if you have a mental disability, you have been diagnosed with a disability that deals with mental illness. You can qualify for the transitional housing programme which we can send somebody to that programme which will take away from. We have different programmes like that, we will find the best one that works for them. Then we have a programme that is internal where we will actually help them pay for three months of their rents and utilities, application fees for housing. We will pay for all of these things for up to three months and then we will help them additionally. But the goal is to help them move towards becoming more independent. It is really helpful and I got to tell you especially during the pandemic we realized how important that became because we actually ended up helping a hundred and seventy eight families last year. There are a lot of families to put to our transitional housing programme. But what we were noticing during the high peaks of the pandemic with the people that were in these homes were not able to have access to communicating with shelters and stuff were already making the decision like, "I am getting out of here for good." I think before, they would come back and forth to the shelter and that was okay because we were educating them and supporting them during the process. But they did not have to do that all by themselves while they were in their homes, they had to make those really serious decisions and so when they made the decision to get out, they were ready to get out, they needed help with that point. Now we ran out of housing in our state. So, we are having a really hard time now and I would say this is from our homeless and everybody is

having a hard time finding housing now. But at that time, it was really good and I am very glad that we were able to have extra money to help them, the victims in those situations. What is also good to say is that many of them ended up staying out of those relationships which is also really good, because we know again they go back so many different times. I am sure that there are a lot of things that I am missing but one of the other things that I feel like is really important for me to share with you. Here, in this last couple of years, many years ago I was introduced to a model called a Family Justice Centre and it is an evidence-based model that is world-wide now. It has been something that I have wanted to have come to Arkansas. It is a multiple agency, all of underneath one roof providing services for victims of violence. Here, within the last few years, we have actually decided to go ahead and forward in doing it, something similar here in Arkansas state. What is so good about that is that when a victim walks to the door they will not have to go anywhere else to get services. I do not know how it is with you guys but, like, we have a bus system here. So, if somebody comes to our shelter it could take the whole day trip just to get to the social security office, go down there, sit, get their card and come back. That is two bus trips switching in the middle of the down-town area where you know where the main depo is. So, that is just one day and that is exhausting. I always think about, like when I was a survivor, and I had a little girl that was eighteen months old and my baby infant car, carried the little thing and going up these really steep stairs and carrying groceries and all. I mean sometimes you just wonder how in the world do they do it right? I sometimes wonder how in the world I do that. We have to find ways to make it easier for victims because we make it easier for them to go back because we make the system so hard here. This is why we are doing this, we will be people that provide social security cards, ID and exams and police reports, order protections electronically. All of these things will be underneath one roof, along with our shelter being one of the other programmes. That way, victims will not have to go anywhere else. They don't have to stay in the shelter while they are there but they just will be able to get the services at the shelter if they need services there. That is something we are hoping we will have happening in the next two years. We are actually within our capital campaign right now raising money to build that building. The building we are currently in is a hundred and fourteen years old, so it is really old and we need to get out of it. Unfortunately, we still have a large number of people we are not able to serve because there are so many domestic violence victims out here.

Kübra Karagöz: Thank you very much for your presentation, Angela. We continue with questions. First question is for you Tamar. You mentioned in your presentation that expenses can be received from the perpetrator, can you elaborate on that? How does it work when it comes to psychologist or legal fees?

Tamar Çitak: In criminal cases, judges can also rule on compensation in favor of women and this compensation is valid for thirty years. The literal translation of the German term for this compensation is “grief money”. Even the perpetrator has been imprisoned for five or ten years, as soon as he starts earning income after his release, enforcement proceedings can be initiated. The Ministry of Social Security has a fund allocated to such emergencies, although it does not cover the exact figure. An allowance is granted to women in place of this grief money which can reach up to 8000 Euros in severe cases. Afterwards, it is women’s job to get the money from the perpetrator. We leave the rest to the women, telling them that the rule is valid for thirty years.

If the man has hired a lawyer during the trial process, woman can also receive the compensation in installments or a lump sum by corresponding with his lawyer.

We follow these procedures together with the woman. Let me give you an example. There was an incest case where the stepfather raped his daughter. In fact, the girl got pregnant and had to give birth; and there were stretch marks on her abdomen. It was psychologically very disturbing for her. Since it was not possible to have a plastic surgery for free in the healthcare system, she had to go to a private clinic to have the operation. It costed 6000 Euros. We sent the bill to the Ministry of the Ministry of Social Security, and they reimbursed us that 8000 Euros.

Kübra Karagöz: Thanks a lot Tamar. Melda, it’s your turn.

Melda: I have two questions for Tamar. You explained that in your system, the cases of violence that come to your intervention center are first reported to the police, and the police notify you. In this sense, how do persons subjected to violence reach you in cases that are not reported to the police or the cases where there won’t be any legal action taken? If you cannot take any action in such cases, how is this gap filled in the system? Secondly, how does the system guarantee that these incidents that are reported to the police are effectively reported to your intervention centers? In our country, unfortunately, the police also function as part of the patriarchal system and many of the cases that are reported to the law enforcement are not properly processed. They either try to dissuade the complainant and give them false information, or they try to reconcile the person subjected to violence with the perpetrator of violence. Here I wonder who or which institution steps in in cases where the police do not properly refer the case to the judicial system.

Tamar Çitak: Our intervention center is in Vienna, and almost half of all restraining orders issued by the police in Austria is in Vienna. That’s why we at the Vienna Intervention Center are much more accessible than those in the other states. We are open seven days a week and can be reached

via phone. Of course, we primarily deal with cases that are referred by the police, but that doesn't mean that women cannot call us without applying to the police. They all call, especially friends and neighbors of those who have received support from us before. There are many such requests. Also, if there is a murder case that is found coverage in the media, there are many women who apply to us at those times. Our priority here is to talk to women and do a risk analysis. We are specialized in conducting risk assessment to see if any emergency plan is needed. If the woman is not ready, undecided, or just want to consult on her legal rights, we refer her to our sister organizations. As soon as she says, "I want to take an action, but I don't know how, I want to go to the police, I want file a criminal complaint," we accept that women for support. The difference is this: if a woman is not yet psychologically ready, we refer her to sister organizations; whereas if a woman wants to take urgent action, we admit them and provide the same support. In fact, we accompany women when they file a criminal complaint to the police, we escort them and get the fourteen-day police ban issued.

As for your second question, this question of system is really interesting. It often runs parallel to the government policies. For example, a lot of women come to us and say, "I went to the police, but they did not take me seriously." Or she goes to the police, files a criminal complaint because she was subjected to male violence, but the police did not issue a fourteen-day ban for her. Or she goes to the police and tells –or can't tell– them her problem –this has also happened to us–, but the police direct her to the court and apply for a restraining order. When a woman goes to court, the court officers, the secretaries, even the security guard at the door –especially after the pandemic– immediately direct them to us. If the woman contacts another counselling center, that is, a women's counselling center, and says, "I went to the police, but they didn't take me seriously", that counselling center also calls us. In other words, the intervention centers are the institutions that deal directly with the police in Vienna or in other states. In such a situation, we immediately take all the necessary measures to make the system work as it should. We talk to the chief of the police station or higher authorities. If the woman has not been able to make her case, which actually happens to us, we go together and file the criminal complaint again as it should be. We can do these things as long as the case reaches us. In the second system, shelters also work in this way. Since the police make referrals to the intervention centers, these centers are not publicly advertised or campaigned. Women's shelters, on the other hand, organize campaigns; they have a system that is much more deep-rooted in women's minds. When they go to the shelters and talk about their cases, of course our friends in the shelters provide counselling and escort her to file a complaint as long as the woman wants. I also tell women in the information meetings that they should enter into the system from any channel they can find, once they are in the system, they can be guided and directed to the right place.

Kübra Karagöz: Thanks a lot Tamar. Angela, we got a question during your presentation: do you ever get incest cases? How do you work on this issue?

Angela McGraw: We have had many cases over the years but there has been incest in fact unfortunately in the South where we are located, it seems to be something to happen often. I do not know if the phrases are used there like it is here. But there is a good old voice system and for here, we, a lot of times do not get anything done, similar to what you were talking about a second ago when it comes to law enforcement covering things up. We have a lot of rural areas and people know each other. Law enforcement know the perpetrator, they grew up with them, they went to school with them and so when there is incest situation, a lot of times, we do not get them to the place where they get into the court and get prosecuted. In those situations more than anything what we have to do is just help the victim figure out the safest place for them to be, whether that is relocating to another place in the United States or making sure that they get the counseling they need. Unfortunately, I wish I could say that we are just successful but we are not. I mean it is something different but we too have compensation when it comes to different levels here. If you get an order of protection here and it is successful, they have decided to have a permanent order put against the perpetrator, the perpetrator is responsible for paying for the court fees and all of that. So they will get charged for all of that. If there is an attorney who has been hired in that process, they can also be made to pay for the attorney's fees too. Sometimes that will happen in custody orders, not all the time but sometimes. Then on a larger level, we have something that the each of the state does, which is compensation that work and so, again kind of like a rape or incest or something where there has been a sexual violence but it also could happen in domestic violence. I have worked with murder cases before where the perpetrator came into the home, the son was trying to protect mum and they got into a physical fight The son killed the perpetrator which would have been her husband. He ended up dying at the front door and in that area. We had to get the compensation that worked to come in and pay for the fees of taking the flooring out of the house. Because she cannot even sell the house and get out of it until that area is fixed. There were also holes in the home, walls and stuff like from the abuse that she had. They had to fix those. The other thing that was bad about that situation is they were not paying for the funeral cost in that though. Even though she was responsible for paying for the funeral cost, they would do it because he was not the victim in that situation, he was the perpetrator. So, our compensation only pays for victim related situations. If a woman goes to the hospital, here and this is throughout the United States, if she goes for a rape and she has not examine done or anything related to it. They are not supposed to get a bill sent to them directly, it is supposed to be sent to the state and the state is supposed to pay for it without her seeing any financial parts of it. It is any rape situation happens that they go

to a medical place. But it pays more than that. It pays for counseling, and it could pay for a lot of different things. It goes to a certain amount but it also kind of depends on what the situation is, what category of seriousness it is. That makes sense.

Tamar Çitak: Maybe it is worth mentioning that in Austria, there are many women's counseling centers specialized in sexual violence, harassment, and rape. They also receive support from the Ministry of Justice for attorneyship. We do not take these cases per se in the intervention centers. Since they are more specialized, we, on the other hand, are more focused on physical and psychological violence. When such a thing happens, we immediately get into contact with these organizations to collaborate with them. While we work for security of women's lives, we hand over the attorneyship of the case to them and co-work with them. This is very important. We do not feel as experts on this particular subject. In the example I just gave, I was actually supporting the mother of that girl because of her experience of violence. I guessed from what the woman told me and how the man behaved that something was wrong at home. And I came to this conclusion by pushing her to talk and by calling the girl and talking to her. I was actually supporting the mother. This incident surfaced very late in the process. But since the mother greatly trusted me, it was my case and since I was the first person that the girl ever talked about it, I went to the police with the girl. That's why I gave this example. When such a case comes directly to the police, we immediately get in touch with sister organizations to work together.

Kübra Karagöz: Melda, you wanted to talk.

Melda: Thank you very much Angela, it was a great presentation. I have two questions for you. I am a lawyer and trying to become a volunteer at Mor Çatı, here in İstanbul. So, my questions are a little bit related to the legal side of things, if you have knowledge and can you clarify, that would be great. You talked about domestic violence victims, anyone that comes to your shelter. I do not know how your laws are but does that only limit victims who are living under the same roof with the perpetrator or that also covers other types of relationships whether or not they live together, the victim and the perpetrator? My second question is about the legal fees that when the victim goes to court and the court might order the perpetrator to pay the costs and even in some cases the lawyer's fees. What I was wondering is in your shelter, do you provide any assistance to the victims to find lawyers and how does that work? Do you have a legal aid system that the state, maybe, pays for the lawyers' fees, whether or not the orders of the court require the perpetrator to pay it?

Angela McGraw: Let me start with the order of protection and the family members. Our law has changed over the years, it has advanced. Where initially, it was just people who collocated together underneath one roof and

that was where we clarified them to be able to get an order of protection. In most recent years, particularly I think it was 2019, there was an addition to the law. But still had to be living underneath the same roof of the person that was being abusive towards you. Here for instance, we have had a lot of times where families have co-located together so the abuser might take the family and they go and live with his family. So, the mum or the father of the abuser might be just as abusive to the victim and her children. It would be everybody that is underneath that roof could actually have an order of protection and get some. Just as a side-note, with our order of protection process as well, I admitted earlier that the victim has to be the one that follows the order of protection, the only exemption is that an advocate can file on behalf of the victim or her children if they need to. I have had to do that a couple of different times, where the victim did not feel like she was able to do that, it had too much danger. But I felt it was very important for the children to have some protection against them. Even though there was a child abuse report that was put in place and that system was ruling at the same time. It was not ruling as fast as I felt like there needed to be a protection against children at that time. So, that is the order of protection. Legal phase, great question. So, we have a few different processes. We have legal aid here which is a programme that helps. It is a kind of sliding scale, financially depending on whether or not the person can pay for it. Lots of the people who come to our shelter are about two hundred percent below the poverty level. Almost all of them can get legal aid if there is money. The only exception is that if the perpetrator knows the system as well, they call legal aid first and then their name is in there. Then it becomes a conflict of interest and they no longer support the victim which is pretty pathetic as far as I am concerned. I guess I understand but it makes me really frustrated. Of course, one of the very first things I am doing, for asking the victims, is to just make the phone call. Even if you do not even use it, just make the phone call so your name is on the list. Now, if we can get services through legal aid, I start going through the telephone but we have a lot of attorneys who will help, support us in our work and will do pro-bono. Here, some attorneys have to have a quota of pro-bono cases that they have to meet each year. Sometimes you do, sometimes you do not find the right ones. Honestly you would know this but if you do not have an assertive attorney that goes to court in these situations, they can get aid really fast. So, just finding somebody who says "I am interested." This is not always what is going to work best in these custody issues. There are a lot of mums here in the United States that are losing their children right now because of parent alienation which is not even supposed to be a term. I mean just all kinds of stuff here, is really happening a lot right now. I have had through the years attorneys that will take on these cases. But it gets really pricey for them. So, you usually only see them do it couple of times before they decide they are not going to do it anymore. What we have ended at finding out, I think some of the shelters there are a little bit more of progressive

in this area trying to get some finding in through federal resources to be able to pay legal services to the point and paying for an attorney, even the alarm systems that put to be their houses, or you know, the magnets on the doors, or cameras those types of things. Those are the things that we can have put in order if we want to, court order. I actually found out about a really bad one this last week. I cannot even believe it, actually I have still needing to file a complaint about this but, there was an abuser that just somehow convinced the judge that he needed be able to see his daughter while she has been visiting her mum, and it has been a really complicated case but they actually court ordered cameras to be put in her home so that he could watch what was happening while his daughter was there, for six weeks. I have never and ever in all my years heard of anything like that before. I have been waiting patiently for tomorrow, so I can file some complaint regarding that. I cannot believe that it is even legal. I mean, it kind of goes back and forth but that is what we have available for. I will tell you that the part of the Family Justice Centre is that we are hoping have legal presentation inside of the Family Justice Centre, and one of the pilots that they have been working on here in the last few years, is working really closely with the law schools here to where people who immediately or just are getting out of law school can actually work at the Family Justice Centre and provide those cases. I will be honest with you, anybody who is dealing with counseling or law, I feel like doing the internship or something at the domestic violence shelter should be a must. There is just so much of it that is happening. So, I hope that we are able to get that going. We have a lot of people, they are going to law school and there is no reason why they should not be able to help some of our victims.

Burcu: I have a question for Tamar. You talked about a very good practice. Maybe I didn't fully get it, but at some point, you said that the period for appealing to the penalty is six months for the married and one year for the unmarried. I wonder why there is such a difference. Also, is the injunction period fixed for fifteen days? Can't it be extended? Is it enough? There was a time in Turkey when six-month period was implemented and even that was too little. Now, of course, it is much shorter. I am curious about these two things.

Tamar Çitak: I think I need to explain the law a little bit more. Our Protection against Violence Act is different from that of Turkey. It has three pillars. The first pillar is a fourteen-day injunction by the police. Then comes an extension, a restraining order by the local court. In fact, when the law came into force in 1998, it was seven days. Then there was an amendment, upon the request of the judges, it was increased to ten days as it was too short. Now it is fourteen days. This is a ban regulated directly in the Police Act. The restraining order –for six months or one year– is the second pillar of the Protection against Violence Act, it begins when the person subjected to

violence submits a petition to the court. The police can issue it once and for a maximum of fourteen days, and both parties must comply with this fourteen-day ban, and the perpetrator is banned from coming within a 100-meter perimeter of the person exposed to violence. So, if the woman lets the perpetrator man in the house, she is also penalized, that is she is fined. They both have to comply with the fourteen days rule. If the woman wants to extend this period, if she submits a petition to the local course, this is automatically reported to the police by the court. So, there is an uninterrupted transition for the woman, and the court has to make a decision in a very short time to extend the restraining order. The law stipulates a period of maximum six months for married people, because in the divorce legislation the house in which the couple resided during the marriage is considered the marital household. Therefore, the process can lead to the division of property. That is, the man is also considered the rightful owner of that house. Still, if the woman files for divorce within this six-month period, the restraining order can be automatically extended until the divorce is finalized. In fact, if the divorce is a contested one, they are divorced but the proceedings for division of property and the marital household continue. Again, the restraining order can be automatically extended until these proceedings are over. The six-month difference in the implementation of married and unmarried cases is because of the divorce legislation on the marital household. Also, as you may all know, it is mostly ex-husbands from whom women got divorced or separated who use violence against, harass, or stalk these women. The law does not require the perpetrator and the person subjected to violence to live in the same house. This was also improved in the past years. There are cases where a woman is divorced and lives in a different house and a different neighborhood, but the man still harasses her. In such cases too the police can impose a fourteen-day ban. Upon a criminal complaint, the court extends the injunction for up to one year. If the perpetrator violates the injunction in this one-year period or has committed a crime, the court has the right to extend it for another year with a petition. If the perpetrator violated the injunction in that extended period, the petitioner has the right to extend it again for a second year.

Engin: Hello everyone, thanks a lot for the presentations. I work at Hacettepe University. I am working on the intervention programs for men who are perpetrators of violence against women. As you know, there are no such intervention programs in Turkey, hence I am also working for their dissemination. When I look at the examples in Europe and the US, I see that these programs work in coordination with women's services. What would you suggest for creating such a system in Turkey? Do you collaborate with these perpetrator programs? What kind of cooperation do you have? I would be grateful if you could enlighten me on this issue. Thank you.

Tamar Çitak: Yes, this is a part of our work that we actually encounter these male perpetrators all the time, which is one of the differences between our work and that of the shelters. [Our work is] to re-examine their behavioral patterns for risk assessment. Let me put it this way: we think a lot about male perpetrators in our daily working life. For many years, for almost twenty years, we have been working in partnership with the men's counseling center and accompany women in anger management therapies for male perpetrators (their husbands or ex-husbands). In our context, preparations for this anger management therapy takes two months including the first interview, appointment, diagnostics, etc., and the therapy itself takes eight months. It is sometimes individual interviews and sometimes group therapy at the men's counseling center. In this process, we keep in touch with women and hear about the men's behaviors from them. After that we come together with the men's counseling center and evaluate the process together. So, we are also watching the process. We know from experience that most of the time perpetrator men do not talk about the violence they have committed, even within the scope of the program. The reason for that is first of all the starting point. We receive this information from women, and then we evaluate it with our friends at the men's counseling center. Secondly, again very recently, as of September 1, there has been an amendment in the Protection against Violence Act, and people who have been removed from their houses are made obligated to receive six hours of counseling under the law. For this, new centers have been established in the states. That is to say, if a person gets the fourteen-day ban, the police give them the phone number and address of this center together with the injunction. He has to call the contact number and make an appointment within the first five days. There, issues such as the psychological state of the perpetrator, risk assessment, how his/her life is going in general, maybe whether or not he/she needs support are discussed for a total of six hours which can also be divided into two 3-hour sessions. This is also a good monitoring method. I can't say much since this is a very new work. We don't have much experience. Maybe, I should mention one more thing: while accompanying women, who have been exposed to violence, in these criminal cases, especially at the decision phase, both our lawyers and sometimes we as psychosocial counselors ourselves prescribe anger management therapy to the perpetrator, and we present the written reasons for this to the court and the judge. This is a very successful method. I say this, because actually very few men go to these anger management therapies by their own will. The court can rule for parole, conditional sentence, postponement of the sentence, but in return the perpetrator has to take this anger management therapy or treatment for alcohol or drug abuse. There is a risk that their prison sentence will be executed unless they comply with these decisions. This has a very positive impact on our work. This is the only way we can refer these male perpetrators to get support for themselves.

Kübra Karagöz: Thanks a lot, Tamar. Maybe Angela also would like to add to the same question.

Angela McGraw: Yes, thank you. Let me go back to the order of protection. I just want to mention briefly that our order of protection's aim can be put upon an abuser and depends on the judge, and the judge makes a decision on that. That can be as little as a month, two months to as long as up to ten years. I say it that way because there is not a defined law of what constitutes how many years. It really, literally, is completely up to the judge and how serious they think the situation is. It just really depends. I have seen situations that have been extremely dangerous where a judge has given the person one year then they would have to come back after a year to where they have had others for ten years like "Why? Why?" I mean, I am glad for the highest amount but I just think it is sometimes interesting because there are no guidelines. Then, as far as enforcing it we do not really have anybody that really enforces that unless the victim decides to call and say that the order of protection has been violated. She can call law-enforcement; it will be up to them whether or not that they actually turned it into the prosecutor attorney's office. So we have some different things happen on that as well. Now the other question you are dealing with. I used to facilitate what we called Batters Intervention Group at our jail here, in our local area. It was ongoing. One of the things that we have tried to do here of late, is working more closely in developing some standards for abusive classes, for abusers' state and classes. We still have judges here who will send them to anger management classes but we know domestic violence, intimate partner violence is not about anger. We know it is just one of the components just like substance abuse, jealousy or any of those. We know that it is just a different part of it. We really do encourage them to participate in a long term-abuser accountability type of group, but even though this is very important, it rarely happens. Some of the most successful abuser accountability classes that had been placed in the United States have been over two years. They will go through a series of classes over and over a year. Then they turn around a kind of co-facilitator of those classes along with somebody who has already done the same thing. What we find out is that, that is holding them accountable. Because we are talking about a behavior, it is a learned behavior and so, just to change it overnight, eight weeks, you know, six months. It is just not going to happen. For us, what we have learned is that it very closely resembles substance abuse where you just every single day have to make a decision that you are not going to abuse the person that you say you care about. We also do not allow, I say not allow but we strongly suggest that counselors do not have counseling sessions with the victims inside their counseling sessions. We also do not suggest that the victims come into any type of these abusive accountability classes and be part of that. We do have, though, like survivors who will go in and share their stories with the abusers and help them understand some

of the dynamics may not come from their victim, the person that they have victimized but from a group of people who do not mind sharing their stories with them. Obviously, there are some counselors that are separated from this process that would do counseling together with them but we strongly suggest like our religious community and our counseling process not to do any kind of counseling and stuff with the abuser. Because of course we just know that there are a lot of unspoken rules and characteristics, those types of things that happen within those sessions allow us with no, if you are in an abusive relationship. So, I think that is all I wanted to share.

Özge: I wonder how many of the perpetrators you encounter are perpetrators of violence against women, and how many of them have anti-social behaviors in their own lives. For instance, do these people exhibit similar behaviors against everyone in their lives? Do they have anti-social personality disorder? Or do they simply act in misogyny? I am curious about this distinction. Because in Turkey, we, feminist women and women working in solidarity centers and shelters, generally advocate something like this. We do not prefer to work with men because the root cause of violence is gender inequality. We act with the presupposition that while an individual man would not do this to a policeman or someone else whom he deems as an authority, he may do this to a woman, to his child, that is to the person who he actually can. Especially after Turkey pulled out of the Istanbul Convention, the government in Turkey rushed to put into effect a program to provide counseling to men. What you mentioned reminded me of it. Due to our position in Turkey, we, feminist women, stand against this. I'd like to hear your thoughts on it. By the way, I am a therapist and a Mor Çatı volunteer, I work with women. I don't want to work with men.

Tamar Çitak: As I mentioned, we conduct a risk assessment with women on the person with whom they are in a violent relationship. So, we have various methods in this regard. These are questions and answers based entirely on the violence experienced. We can more or less deduce the answer to the question you mentioned –whether he is like this with everyone he encounters– from the questions and answers asked and answered during the risk assessment. Those profiles are immensely important for us because this is how we can find out the extent to which women and their children are at risk. Cases with personality disorders, antisociality, etc. correspond to about 10%. The remaining 90% are usually those who committed violence against women bearing the perspective of a male-dominated culture. That is, these are perpetrators acting with a typical male mentality.

Angela McGraw: I do not know if this is different but we have very strong discrimination laws here in the United States. We have to be very careful about whether somebody is identified as a victim, not allowing them to be identified as a victim. What that means is that if a male calls our shelter,

they claim that they have been a victim of domestic violence. Then, we have to let them in as long as we have cross-checked everything and their abuser is not in the shelter, per say. Now, we have had a few situations where the perpetrator got into the shelter under that false pretense. It was extremely frustrating because of the laws we cannot discriminate against. Then, we have to figure out a safe way of being able to get them out of the shelter. We have been in a few situations like that and it can be very scary. I would still say that domestic violence, again, is primarily against women here and males are usually the primary aggressor. But, what we know about domestic violence is that it is all about power and control and who has it. So, in kind of doing assessments and stuff too, if we are hearing different things. Just because they have an order of protection against them let us say. We have a victim who calls us and says they will have an order of protection against them. They could say that they got scratches on the abuser and so, they arrested her instead. While we know obviously that there could have been strangulation. Because of being strangled she was trying to get out of there and scratch their face and that was how she ended up, how she became the primary aggressor. So, then we have to deal with that. But we still did not let her into the shelter because she claimed that, you know, she was a victim and we understand that. So, I do not know that answers completely but I will tell you, for us, it is just about power and control and who has it. We have noticed a lot of times in these relationship, I mean, we could literally can be sitting in a religious organization like a church or school and everybody, even law enforcement officers that you were talking about earlier, who look like to everybody else that they are the perfect gentlemen that they are the sweetest persons in the world. You cannot see a bad bone in their body, they walk through the door at home and they are the persona of a monster inside the house. So, I mean, we know that happens and we know that they really good at hiding it. And so, our job is to believe the survivor in these situations and to move forward that way in helping her safety plan that she was going through, the situation she is dealing with.

Engin: I will very quickly add something. In 2014, a project was launched in Ankara. Within the scope of Law No. 6284, men for whom a restraining order was issued was prescribed with anger management training. I analyzed this training in my doctoral thesis. Working with men is something designed in coordination with work with women, albeit outside of it. Of course, changing behavior is not that easy, there are many social, cultural, and political contexts. But I think it is very important to make sure men participate in such programs, at least to show that violence does not go unpunished. From a feminist perspective, I understand that women need more support and I understand not making an effort for men. But I also think it is very valuable and important to include men in this process to achieve gender equality. That's why I think that these programs designed for perpetrators are very important and we should think about it more. Thank you.

Kübra Karagöz: To sum up, there were questions about this subject in the main conference yesterday. Liz Kelly said that there are such practices, but these kinds of work should not be the responsibility of women's organizations, or their budget should not be cut off from the budget allocated to combating violence against women. They should have their own separate budget, and separate studies should be carried out. Many feminists oppose the idea of cutting the budget and space allocated for women, rather than working with men.

Angela McGraw: I agree with you when it comes to anger management. I think this is where some of the confusion has come from when it comes to judges is that anger management certainly is a component of domestic violence. I mean, you do not see people who are abusers, who at some point never are angry. I am going to tell you here, in the area that I work the only way we were able to get into high-schools, middle-schools, juvenile attention facilities, alternative schools, the only way we can get into them to talk to them about domestic violence was through anger management classes because it seems we have a lot of people who are angry and everybody wants us to come and help people learn how to deal with conflict resolution. But we also see a lot of children who are dealing with anger that comes from their homes where there is domestic violence, also present. We just feel like, here that it is just a component of it, that there are many different components to abuser accountability classes, like I said earlier.

Kübra Karagöz: I move on to another question: Can a woman's participation in self-defense courses be financially supported? In other words, can she get support from the state or from the assailant? Is support to protect women provided in the form of video surveillance and contact with the police? And finally, can the woman obtain a gun license for self-defense purposes? Does the gun serve to deter assaults, if so, how effectively?

Tamar Çitak: Yes, there is also financial support for women to attend self-defense courses. In fact, there are programs and funds for this. So, the woman does not have to pay for anything. Maybe, you could figure out Austria a little bit in my presentation, everything is under state control, all funds come from the state. But they don't interfere too much in our internal working, they ask to do things. So, they don't charge the perpetrator for it. The woman can attend a self-defense class if she wants, there are funds specifically for that purpose. She doesn't have to pay for it, nor does the perpetrator. As for the second question, the answer is no. There is no such practice in Austria. Women are just told to call the police emergency hotline in the face of any risk. On very special cases, there is a special unit in the Ministry of Interior. They go to the applicant's house and provide financial assistance for rendering the house, the house door and windows more secure. They organize these things, but first this unit has to approve

the process, and the Ministry of Interior covers the expenses. There is no example of a gun license for self-defense given upon women's request, so I cannot say anything. No woman has made such a request yet, and I think, looking at the Austrian regulations for gun permit, this is not a valid reason for getting a license.

Angela McGraw: Self-defense classes are all pretty much voluntary here. So, if somebody wants to go to self-defense classes, they can. Sometimes we will have somebody who will give those classes at the shelter for a little charge or just on a volunteer basis. I will tell you that what we have found is that self-defense classes are not very helpful in domestic violence situations. Mainly because in a situation where abuse ends up starting, it is usually in the home during an intimate type, you know, situation. It does not come to mind immediately that self-defense is something you should do against the person that you love. Now, I will say that like in stalking or you know you have left a relationship, I could see where maybe it would work, but there are a lot of emotions that are involved when it comes to self-defense. When you are using that it is more successful when it is somebody that you do not know than with somebody that you do know and using it against them. Firearms? I will tell you absolutely a no here. In fact when order of protection is actually put in place, the firearms are supposed to be taken out of the abusers' homes also. That does not happen here but they are supposed to. They are not supposed to have firearms as long as there is an order of protection in place. We do not believe that violence as a response to violence is a good idea. A lot of times when a firearm is used, there is a way of trying to protect. Obviously the situation I told you about very early, about the woman that I was working with who killed her husband, it was because of a gun she ended up with, she shot and he died. So, we know it happens. But I will even tell you in a situation like that, the aftermath of it was horrific. She lost everything mainly because of the emotional impact that it had on her afterwards. I mean, she very much loved the guy, still at that time her husband, so, she did not want it to end up as being that. We all know that it can be so confusing, the dynamics that are involved with these relationships. But, we just do not believe that the gun is the answer.

Tamar Çitak: But the opposite happens here. If the male perpetrator has a gun carry permit and has committed domestic violence and violence against women, the gun permit is revoked for at least two years.

Kübra Karagöz: Tamar, you said that there is an implementation process for protective measures and restraining orders, and when the woman applies by herself, the process is either very slow or there is no such opportunity. This is somewhat similar in Turkey, but in general, there are processes where women have to go and apply themselves and, in some cases, they have to follow up even after the application. This is not only for social support or

assistance, but also for protection orders. I wanted to ask, when women apply through the institution, does the follow-up process work in the same way? Do they have a system that they can follow up afterwards? Do they always have to be in contact with an institution? And my question for Angela is this: you said that women go through six steps to access protective measures and it takes a long time, could you elaborate on these steps?

Angela McGraw: I would say that here, that six steps process that I talked about in our court system locally, is not the same thing everywhere in the United States. There are other places that set that differently. Although, all of them have to go through a process either on their own or with the help of somebody. There are a lot of places that do not have a court advocate or a victim advocate of some sort, somebody that can help them fill it out and then they have to go on their own and fill out the information. Then they have to take it to the court house, have to go through that process, being given to the court clerk here, who then files it with the judge. That process by itself can be very tedious because I just know how hard it is. First of all to understand the writing in legal forms and understand what it is that you are needing. I think that our order of protection packet, here in our area, is thirteen pages long. Then you are dealing with, again I told you about our poverty level is two hundred percent below poverty level here, so we deal with a lot of people who cannot read either. So anyway, I could see how easy it would be just to throw your hands up and forget it, I mean why would you bother? You cannot read it, you cannot understand it, you do not have somebody helping you to fill it out, now you have to go in front of a judge and you have to tell them about everything that happened. A lot of times, they will not tell about the worst situation, the most serious situation and our law here, there is the word "intimate fear", so a lot of times people think that it has to be a physical act or something but the fearful part was them playing russian roulette with the gun in their head and not actually going off. But was that enough to leave the relationship? Absolutely it was enough. Was it fearful? Yes, it was. Then why not put that down on a piece of paper and sometimes they do not know what the most important things are to put on the paper. When somebody hits the wall next to your head, well they did not hit me, so maybe it was not something I should put down. But they just put a big hole in the wall. That says that, you know, it could have been my face. So, you want to put that down on the paper and then, also along with that, I told you earlier that we have a lot of people who are losing their children here, in the United States because of the system saying it is for you to protect the children, so they are taking these children from their mums and putting them in foster-care and stuff here. So, a lot of mums, a lot of victims are very, very scared that they will lose their children in the process, so they will not go to court because of that.

Tamar Çitak: Since all these support services are reported to the state

organs by women's and feminist organizations working against violence, they actually want us to carry out these works because they want to secure themselves. Therefore, women are prevented from doing anything on their own. But for the injunction, I can say one hundred percent that it is for the convenience of the judges. Every woman who is subjected to violence is not helpless, she can do her own work, her daily work, and claim her demands. When the judicial organs refer women back to us, we argue with the judge, saying that the woman does not want it and we force the judges to accept it. In fact, if we get very angry, we tell the woman to get a piece of paper, we dictate the petition on the phone and ask her to write it like this. We tell them that the judge has to process this file for you. There are cases where we do this. But after that, there is no need for monitoring, women don't need to follow it up. The only important thing is that during the restraining order, if the perpetrator of violence defies this decision, they should definitely report this to the police. Because there is a place for this in the Police Act: violation of the restraining order is punishable. If the perpetrator comes to the woman's house again and commits violence against her, there is a criminal complaint again or when he disturbs her, there is a criminal complaint. In the case of assault, a new criminal case added to the file, but only when he causes a disturbance, he is fined by the police for violating the injunction. In Austria, in general, if there is a threat, if the perpetrator violates the ban and approaches the woman saying, "I will kill you if you don't come back to me," this is a very big factor for the police to immediately issue an arrest warrant by the prosecutor's office. So, there are more arrests in these cases, in others, the perpetrators are fined.

Kübra Karagöz: Angela, would you also like to talk about the sanction given to the perpetrator when he goes back to the woman's house, beats her, or harasses her even though the restraining order is still in force.

Angela McGraw: It really just depends. I remember doing a speaking engagement for a group of women who were in patients in substance abuse programme. They had different levels of housing that they went into based of the level they were in their programme. There was a house that had these women in their last stage of their programme. Early in the morning before I came to my group that day because they were really abstract and distraught and so, we were talking about what made them feel that way. They were telling me about 4 o'clock in the morning that law enforcement had showed up to the house that was next door to them. There was an ambulance there, she was in the back of the ambulance and the perpetrator was in the back seat of the car. The women were really upset because when the woman left the ambulance they let the abuser out of the car and let him go back into the house. They did not do anything to him. Our experience is here, it really, totally just depends. When the women were angry and they voiced that to the police officers here, the police officers said, "Well, the

victim is just going to go back in the morning and bail him out of the jail anyway. We have been here so many times, we are tired of it and we are tired of wasting the money doing it in the resources. So, we are just going to save her a step.” That is what they told them. Of course that was why the women were so upset. They were like, “We know that it could have been the last time she decided to do that and it did not matter.” That is what we do with here. Sometimes we will get law enforcement who know that they have arresting power with the order of protection to arrest the abuser. But because we know that there are victims who will go back a few times before they actually get out, our law enforcement get tired, our judges get tired, our court system gets tired and I know advocates get tired but if you are an advocate of mine, in my staff you better not get that tired because our job is to support them, educate them and hopefully get them to a place that they make that decision to leave ultimately. I wish I could tell you that there was just a concrete, like something happens and the law enforcement have to go and arrest but it just does not happen in that way here.

Kübra Karagöz: Things that go wrong are similar in many places, especially when it comes to law enforcement, courts, and legal regulations.

Filiz: Is there any financial support from governments for these families to receive therapy before the incident of violence happens?

Angela McGraw: So, I think prevention is really important. I do not know if this is something that you guys know as true where you are but it seems like we will have a lot of funding for prevention and not any for intervention. Then we will go through a period of time where we have lots of money for intervention and not enough for prevention. I do not know why it is so we cannot find a balance between the two, intervention and prevention all at one time. But I think that the closest thing that we have gone into, I feel like it is you know, making sure that or letting young people know that there are programmes that are out here keeping them, giving them information. I think we do that too with adults but unfortunately the system is one of which it seems like we are doing more intervention than we are prevention. Even educating our community, we do not get as much funding doing that as we do in the shelter for providing those services. I know that I am not really answering your question too much but, really I think for us it has just been more about educating young people about the dynamics of dating violence and about healthy and unhealthy relationships, trying to help them understand what the red-flags are before they get into those relationships. I think some of that has been successful. I have had a number of people who, I mean, I have children now who are adults that I ran into. They worked with their mums when they were younger and I mean they knew where to go because of where their mums were at you know. Then of course, I have also had women who have pulled over on the side of the bridge, saying that “I just broke off this relationship with this guy because I know about

the red-flags now. I did not know that the first time I was going through this, through the abusive relationship.” So, it is just really for us getting the word out and educating people about the services that are available to them. There are actually red-flags that you go and look for an abusive relationship.

Tamar Çitak: Not as a specific state policy, of course, but there are such programs in many parts of Austria in the form of initiatives. Especially in schools and secondary and vocational high schools, there are social workers and school physicians. That is, when it happens or is felt through the child, the family can immediately receive such a service from Social Services free of charge. We have these in Austria, but not the training I am talking about. The social worker at school or the class teacher of that child should be sensitive on this issue. On the other hand, we see it a lot in the cases referred to us, most of the women have made these efforts. They said, “please, let’s see a marriage counselor or family counselor”, but it didn’t help. It is in the system, they can access it if they want, but there are so few men who are ready to receive external support that I think our problem is still there.

Kübra Karagöz: There are Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centers (ŞÖNİM) in Turkey and they are responsible for the coordination and prevention of violence before, during, and after it happens. Unfortunately, these centers very often fail to carry out coordination and prevention works. So, it was very good to hear these examples.

Özge has a comment, she says: “As the country becomes more authoritarian, the gender equality gap is also widening. Therefore, people express themselves more violently.” Looking at all the things we talked today, we heard about the experiences both in Turkey and around the world. One of the advantages of the pandemic is that we can come together and see and hear each other, although online. As feminist women and women’s organizations, we have turned the pandemic to our favor by organizing such meetings.

Finally, I share Sevinç’s comment: “The perpetrator of violence does not want to participate in trainings on male anger management. He doesn’t see it as a problem.” We have discussed this in detail today; indeed, the problem itself is not anger management at all. Men can hide these things very well.

Tamar Çitak: I would like to thank Mor Çatı for this conference. I watched the whole day yesterday on YouTube. It was very good for me too. I would also like to thank the participants for their interest. I am sending love, greetings, and success in your way. In solidarity.

Angela McGraw: I thank you so much for inviting me. It is so relieving to know that there are so many of us all across the world. It has been reassuring to know that some of our difficulties are not the same but we are united in so many other things.

FEMINIST APPROACHES TO SOCIAL WORK IN COMBATING MALE VIOLENCE

WORLD EXPERIENCES

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